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Muslim identities and political strategies:  
A case study of Muslims in the greater  
Cape Town area of South Africa, 1994-2000

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## Acknowledgments

I began my research for this study in 1999. At the time no comprehensive study of Muslim politics in the Western Cape – South Africa's most populous Muslim province and the geographical focus of my research – had been undertaken. My task was complicated further by an atmosphere of fear and suspicion which pervaded Cape Town at that time.

In the late 1990s the city's inhabitants were terrorised by a lethal bombing campaign, which some blamed on Muslims. Much of the popular discourse failed to recognise the diverse and predominantly peaceful dynamics of Muslim politics in the greater Cape Town area. My aim, therefore, was to undertake a study in which all significant strains of Muslim political thought would be given a voice in a balanced and academically rigorous manner.

Field research comprised an important part of my research. As a non-Muslim outsider, my research findings would be incomplete were it not for the assistance and cooperation of numerous members of the Muslim community in the greater Cape Town area. I owe a debt of gratitude to the following in particular: Farid Sayed, editor of *Muslim Views*; Amien Ahmed, at the time manager of Radio 786; Shaykh Achmat Sedick, secretary general of the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC); and Yagyah Adams, at the time an official of the MJC. Their assistance was simply invaluable.

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I undertook this study during a busy decade of living and working in Africa, the Middle East and Europe. My thanks to my close family members – my wife and my sons, my parents and my brothers – for their unstinting support during the vagaries of this project, and for their sense of humour about its progress. I dedicate this study to them, with love.





## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Research problem

The general problem addressed by the case study will be the political dynamics of a Muslim minority in a new and secular democracy. The study will analyse socio-political dynamics, discourses and strategies among Muslims in the greater Cape Town area of South Africa during the period 1994-2000.

Although contested and at least partially constructed, religious understandings and identities can become part of strong affective ties. People's perception of who they are may influence their loyalties, their choice of allies and opponents, and their perception of what their needs are and of what their actions should be. Thus, identities can become politically potent in diverse ways, and political contests can affect the construction of group identities and strategies. New democracies and democratisation may influence such dynamics.

The processes alluded to above have also occurred among Muslims in South Africa, who form less than 2% of the South African population. Since 1994, Muslims have found their way as a numerical minority into a new secular constitutional order that focuses on human rights. The end of South Africa's relative isolation in 1994 has also exposed Muslims to the challenges of globalisation. Muslim identities and understandings of Islam, perceptions of other groups and worldviews, and group interests and strategies have been contested and constructed in this particular context.

The study will focus on the oldest and biggest concentration of Muslims in South Africa, namely Muslims in the greater Cape Town area of the Western Cape province. This area is of interest for several reasons. It is the site where South African Muslims have resided since at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century, whereas the concentrations of Muslims elsewhere in the country only date from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By 2000, more than 225 000 Muslims, almost 50% of all Muslims in South Africa, resided in this area.

Socio-economic and intra-religious differentiations exist among Muslims in South Africa, sometimes in combination with socio-political discourses. The two strongest ethnic groups in the multi-ethnic Muslim community of South Africa are the Cape Malays or Cape Muslims, the descendants of Indonesian, Malay and indigenous people, and Asian Muslims, the descendants of Indian immigrants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The terms Coloured and Cape Malay are used here with recognition of their contested emergence in a situation of rule by other groups. However, these terms are also used in recognition of the primary role people included in this group have played in processes of identity-formation and meaning-making in ways that have re-appropriated and recast the identities signified.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Mohammed Adhikari, *Identity and Assimilation in the Malay Community of Nineteenth Century Cape Town*, History of Cape Town: Work in Progress Workshop, 24 November 1989; Shamil Jeppie, "Commemoration and Identities: The 1994 Tercentenary of Islam in South Africa" in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Scholars Press: Atlanta, Georgia 1996), pp. 73-91; Mohamed

The greater Cape Town area has for centuries been the main space of the Cape Muslims, and Muslims from all backgrounds have created several distinctly Muslim spaces in the area. The Muslim Judicial Council (MJC), a body of Muslim clerics recognized by the government as the most important representative of Muslims, is also based in Cape Town.

The greater Cape Town area is politically important. It forms the socio-economic and political capital of the Western Cape province. The Western Cape province has been one of the few provinces ruled by national opposition parties after 1994. Cape Muslims form a prominent minority in the diverse Coloured population group, the majority group in the province, while Muslims form a majority among the small Indian minority in the province. The study will analyse Muslims' diverse understandings of Islam and their contestation of Muslim, Coloured and South African identities in the context of local and national political struggles.

The study aims to focus on the period 1994-2000, the first seven years of a new democratic dispensation in South Africa. Important socio-political actors in the Western Cape, such as the Islamic Unity Conference (IUC), a body of community organizations, People Against Drugs And Gangsterism (PAGAD), a vigilante movement, and community radio stations emerged during this period.

The study will use theoretical frameworks for group identity politics, minorities in democracies and the role of religion in the public sphere. It will compare the main socio-political discourses and strategies among Muslims before and after 1994, and analyse socio-economic, cultural and intra-religious dynamics in the community. It will also analyse the role of the clerics in promoting a sacred order and the struggle between the IUC and MJC for leadership of the community.

The study will discuss and explore the impact of violence and counter-violence by the state, criminal gangs and the PAGAD vigilante movement on Muslim politics. During the period 1994-2000, non-participation in elections for a non-Islamic dispensation remained an issue in the Muslim community, and the study will also explore how explicitly Muslim parties and prominent Muslim politicians in the ruling and non-sectarian opposition parties participated during two national and two local election campaigns.

The socio-political discourses of the IUC and PAGAD in particular, but also of the MJC, have often included transnational themes related to globalisation, the Iranian Revolution, the Balkans, Kashmir, Palestine and Indonesia. The study will link the local, national and transnational aspects of Muslim socio-political discourses and strategies.

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Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough: Racial identity in the South African Coloured Community* (Ohio University Press: Athens, 2005), p. xiii; Zimitri Erasmus, *Re-imagining Coloured identities in post-Apartheid South Africa, The Burden of 'Race'*, Conference Paper, University of Witwatersrand, 5-8 July 2001; Shamil Jeppie, "Commemoration and Identities: The 1994 Tercentenary of Islam in South Africa" in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Scholars Press: Atlanta, Georgia 1996), pp. 73-91.

Finally, the study will specifically look at the ways in which discourses and strategies since 1994 related to a new secular constitutional order focusing on human rights, and how Muslims as a minority community and as individual voters found their way in a new majoritarian democracy. It will analyse and discuss ways in which different groups in the Cape tried to create symbolic spheres favourable to Islam and the numerical minority of Muslims.

### **The Aim of the Study**

The aim of this study is threefold:

1. To describe and analyse the historical, religious, socio-economic, racial, gender, cultural and spatial dynamics that shaped the context of Muslim politics in the greater Cape Town area in the period 1994 to 2000.
2. To describe and analyse the main socio-political actors, discourses and strategies among Muslims in the greater Cape Town area in the period 1994 to 2000, with attention to local, national and transnational dimensions.
3. To explore the ways in which different Muslim actors and Muslims as a minority community found their way in a new secular and majoritarian democracy.

In doing so, the following questions will be answered:

- a) What were the main contested identities and religious understandings among Muslims in the greater Cape Town area until 1994?
- b) What were the main socio-political discourses and strategies that related to these identities and understandings until 1994?
- c) How did such discourses and strategies relate to those of Muslims in other parts of SA?
- d) What were the socio-economic, spatial and cultural contexts of Muslims in the greater Cape Town area in the period 1994-2000?
- e) What were the main contested identities and religious understandings among Muslims in this area since 1994?
- f) What were the main socio-political discourses and strategies that related to these identities and understandings since 1994?
- g) How did such discourses and strategies relate to those of Muslims in other parts of SA?
- h) How did Muslim discourses in greater Cape Town represent non-Muslim groups and institutions?
- i) In which ways did these discourses and strategies relate to the secular political order and how did they conceptualise religion in the public sphere?
- j) How did these discourses and strategies respond to the human rights culture and mechanisms to protect minority group rights that are enshrined in the national constitution?
- k) What was the impact of the struggle between the Muslim Judicial Council and the Islamic Unity Conference for community leadership on discourses and strategies?

- l) In which ways did the violence and counter-violence by the state, PAGAD and criminal gangs during the vigilante campaign against druglords interact with Muslim representations of the self and the other?
- m) To what extent were transnational discourses and identities used as part of the contestation of identities and power in the local Muslim community?
- n) To what extent were the discourses and strategies of the numerical Muslim minority reflected in local, provincial and national electoral politics?
- o) How did the processes of democratisation and the conditions of a new democracy interact with Muslim politics?

### **Limitation and delimitation**

The focus of the study will be on Muslim socio-political discourses and strategies in the greater Cape Town area of South Africa. The study will focus on those discourses and strategies that relate to Muslim identities, understandings of Islam and minority politics in the period 1994 to 2000.

### **Literature survey**

No comprehensive academic study has been done on Muslim socio-political discourses and strategies in the greater Cape Town area in the period 1994 to 2000, perhaps because Muslims form a small minority group with a limited direct impact on election politics. Most studies are in the form of articles and focus on one actor. Books on this period, such as those of Esack<sup>2</sup> and Tayob,<sup>3</sup> refer to political dynamics, but focus on religious hermeneutics. Da Costa and Davids<sup>4</sup> focus on the cultural and religious aspects of the pre-1994 era. Bangstad's pathbreaking study covers marginalised and minor social and political voices among Muslims, but its main focus is on anthropology.<sup>5</sup>

Taylor and Hoeane<sup>6</sup> and Bekker et al.<sup>7</sup> discuss the ethnic dimension of election politics, but only refer in passing to the Muslim dimension. Erasmus<sup>8</sup> focuses on the discourses around Coloured identity with reference to Muslim identities too. Shell, in a chapter in Evtzion,<sup>9</sup> gives a good overview of Muslim history and politics, but it is a short one that

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<sup>2</sup> Farid Esack, *Qur'an, Liberation and Pluralism* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1997) and Farid Esack, *On Being a Muslim: Finding a religious path in the world today* (London: Oneworld, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islam in South Africa: Mosques, Imams, and Sermons* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> Yusuf da Costa and Achmat Davids (eds.) *Pages From Cape Muslim History* (Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> Sindre Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations: Facets of Secularisation and Re-Islamization among contemporary Cape Muslims* (Leiden: Amsterdam University Press, 2007).

<sup>6</sup> R. Taylor and T. Hoeane. "Interpreting the South African election of June 1999," *Politikon* vol. 26 no. 2 (November 1999), pp. 133-144.

<sup>7</sup> S. Bekker, A. Leildé, S. Cornelissen and S. Horstmeier. "The emergence of new identities in the Western Cape", *Politikon* vol. 27 no. 2 (November 2000), pp. 221-237.

<sup>8</sup> Zimitri Erasmus (ed.) *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: Perspectives on Coloured Identities in the Cape* (Kwela Books: Cape Town, 2001).

<sup>9</sup> N. Levzion and R. L. Pouwels (eds) *The History of Islam in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000).

only covers the period until 1998. Vahed,<sup>10</sup> while providing a good analysis of Indian Muslims in the Durban area, does not cover the biggest concentration of Muslims in the Cape.

Günther's article<sup>11</sup> is a very short general overview of Muslim politics in the era since 1994. Her analysis privileges the views of the small group of so-called progressive Muslim thinkers to such an extent that the diverse dynamics in the community do not really emerge from the study. Except for short discussions in Esack's writings, little has been written on parties that participated in local and national elections with explicitly Islamic programs.

Media reports and academic studies of Muslim politics in the period 1994-2000 tend to be dominated by analyses of the predominantly Muslim PAGAD vigilante movement, although this movement only formed one and eventually marginal actor in a very diverse socio-political landscape. Tayob,<sup>12</sup> and Galant and Gamielien,<sup>13</sup> have done pioneering work regarding the foundation phase of PAGAD, but do not cover its evolution after 1996. The study of Boshoff et al<sup>14</sup> focuses on the violent dimensions of the movement, rather than its broader socio-political context.

The short study by Dixon and Johns<sup>15</sup> analyses the interaction between PAGAD's use of violence and its socio-political context well. However, it does not explore PAGAD's relations with other important Muslim actors, like the IUC and MJC. Many publications and broadcasts of pro-PAGAD media, and those of the related Islamic Unity Conference in the period 1997-2000, are also not analysed in these studies or elsewhere.

There has been no study on the representation of non-Muslim groups and institutions in Muslim discourses. There have also been only cursory analyses of the struggle between the MJC and the IUC for community leadership. Tayob,<sup>16</sup> Sonn,<sup>17</sup> Esack and Mesthrie<sup>18</sup> refer to the use of Indonesian, Malaysian, Indian, Iranian and Arabic discourses during the contestation of identities and power in the Muslim community of greater Cape Town.

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<sup>10</sup> G. Vahed, "Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* vol. 20 no. 1 (January 2000), pp. 43-73.

<sup>11</sup> U. Günther, "Lesarten des Islam in Südafrika: Herausforderungen im Kontext des sozio-politischen Umbruchprozesses von Apartheid zur Demokratie", *Afrika Spectrum* vol. 37 no. 2 (2002), pp. 159-174.

<sup>12</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Jihad against Drugs in Cape Town: A Discourse-Centred Analysis", *Social Dynamics* vol. 22 no. 2 (1996), pp. 23-29.

<sup>13</sup> R. Galant and F. Gamielien (eds.) *Drugs, Gangs and Power: Exploring the PAGAD Phenomenon* (Cape Town: Claremont Mosque, 1996).

<sup>14</sup> Henri Boshoff, Anneli Botha and Martin Schönteich, *Fear in the City: Urban terrorism in South Africa*. Monograph 63, Institute of Security Studies, Pretoria 2001.

<sup>15</sup> B. Dixon and L. Johns, "Gangs, PAGAD and the State: Vigilantism and Revenge Violence in the Western Cape", *Violence and Transition* vol. 2 (May 2001).

<sup>16</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence in South Africa: The Muslim Youth Movement* (Cape Town: UCT Press, 1995).

<sup>17</sup> Tamara Sonn (ed.) *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996).

<sup>18</sup> R. Mesthrie, "Some Neglected Languages of the Cape", *Journal for Islamic Studies* vol. 17 (1997), pp. 74-85.

However, a comprehensive analysis in this regard has not been done for the period under discussion.

### **Contribution to the study field**

The study will be the first to give a comprehensive overview and analysis of the diverse socio-political discourses and strategies of Muslims in this period and area, linking local, national and transnational aspects. For this purpose, the study will analyse a number of sources, including the four main Muslim publications, a number of MJC sermons on socio-political issues, organizational submissions by the IUC, PAGAD documents, the election manifestoes of Muslim parties, and broadcasts of Muslim community radio stations.

In addition, the study will explore the links between socio-economic data on Muslims from the 1996 census survey in SA and community dynamics and discourses. The experience gained from the presence of the researcher as a freelance journalist for *Muslim Views* at the meetings and marches of several Muslim organizations will also add value to the analysis.

### **Methodology**

The study will use a number of data sources. These include

- Sermons on socio-political issues, directives, speeches, radio discussions, movement and election manifestoes and representations to the government
- Semi-structured interviews with key leaders and clerics
- Public meetings and demonstrations attended
- Socio-economic data on Muslims in the greater Cape Town area according to the 1996 Census in SA
- Published academic studies
- Virtually all editions of the four main Muslim publications published in the area between 1994 and 2000, namely *Muslim Views*, *Al-Miftah*, *Ad-Da'wah* and *Boorhaanol Islam*

Although census statistics will be analysed, the study will mainly be a qualitative one. The framework for analysis of politics and identity groups will largely be based on the insights of Alberto Melucci<sup>19</sup> and Donald Horowitz.<sup>20</sup> The framework for analysis of politics and Islam will draw on the works of many Muslim and non-Muslim authors, including their interpretations of Muslim history and Muslim political thought in Western Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and South and Southeast Asia. However, the basic approach will be based on that of Mohammad Arkoun.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>20</sup> David Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of Californian Press, 2000).

<sup>21</sup> Mohammad Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (Boulder: Westview, 1994).

## Chapter 2: Framework of Analysis

### Overview

The dissertation will be on the socio-political dynamics of a Muslim minority and the framework of analysis has been designed accordingly. It uses mostly non-Muslim theories and categories from Western political science approaches, especially regarding the dynamics of political discourses, socio-political systems and identities, but in dialogue with Muslim frameworks.

Actors in the Muslim minority under consideration interact with the diverse sphere of Islam and the Muslim world, giving particular attention to various Islamic doctrines and the authoritative early period of Islamic history. Thus, the framework includes the contextualized emergence of Islam and thinking on various dimensions of the Muslim community in the broader Muslim world, such as the diverse understandings of social justice, human rights, unity and pluralism, egalitarianism and differentiation, gender, space and place, social capital, and the specialist interpreters of Islam. This enables the insertion of the case study in analyses of the broader Muslim world.

The framework delineates categories and approaches regarding religion in the public sphere, Muslim thinking on political leadership and authority, and the relations between political leaders and specialist interpreters of Islam. It then focuses on midlevel processes of collective action, the state, democracy, citizenship and rights. Finally, it delineates the options and strategies of minorities in Muslim countries and of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries.

### Political systems and discourses

The strategies, processes and effects of power are present in four different interdependent systems of relationships that may have a shifting hierarchy, namely the productive, political, organizational and reproductive system.<sup>22</sup> The productive system relates to the production and allocation of a society's basic resources, including cognitive, symbolic and relational ones.<sup>23</sup> The political system is only an analytical category, and constitutes the levels at which normative decisions are made about the distribution of these resources between competing interests within a framework of shared rules.<sup>24</sup>

The organizational system governs the society's internal and external adaptation to events, various actors and the environment through processes of integration and exchange. The reproductive system maintains and reproduces the prerequisites for social

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<sup>22</sup> Alberto Melucci, *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 26-28. See also Gilles Deleuze (transl. Seán Hand), *Foucault* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 25-35.

<sup>23</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

life through personal relationships governed by identification, differentiation and communication.<sup>25</sup>

Individuals may share a common structural position in society, with structure referring to all relatively sedimented social practices. However, they have different subject positions or interpretative frameworks, or an ensemble of subject positions, through which they respond to their structural positions and experiences.<sup>26</sup>

Discourses are systems of meaning that combine elements from different parts of society and articulate them in a new identity. A discourse institutes an imaginary horizon or horizon of intelligibility, a framework delineating what may be said and done. Extradiscursive objects exist, but they cannot be grasped until they are constructed through language.<sup>27</sup>

The meaning of each subject position and related discourses is constituted in relations with other subject positions and discourses, identifying or partly identifying with some and excluding others. The relational configuration confers a contingent identity, also constituted by inclusion, erasures, silences and absent subject positions.<sup>28</sup>

This constitutive process is interlinked with politics. In some cases, to establish political frontiers, an “enemy”, “other” or “competitor” has to be chosen or produced.<sup>29</sup> Political actors, often consisting of various groups, may experience a contest between various and often competing discourses within and outside a community. They then struggle to establish a full identity as they try to impose their will upon actors inside and outside a community or try to achieve their aims by compromise or negotiated alliances.<sup>30</sup>

An actor may deploy a whole spectrum of means, including violence, exclusion, articulation and redefinition, persuasion, negotiation, the general framing of the political terrain or institutionalisation to exploit the unique opportunities that are available in any given historical configuration. In the process, it could also establish the hegemony of one discourse.<sup>31</sup>

A hegemonic discourse typically rests on a combination of such processes, through which wide consent is forged or domination is exercised. Subjects can combine politically on

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>26</sup> See David Howarth, *Discourse* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000) for an overview of discourse theory and Aletta J. Norval, *Deconstructing Apartheid Discourse* (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 26, 58-59 and 307 fn. 10.

<sup>27</sup> Norval, op. cit., pp. 4, 29, 85 and 307 fn. 10.

<sup>28</sup> Howarth, “Ideology, Hegemony and Political Subjectivity”, at <http://www.psa.ac.uk/cps/1996/howa.pdf> and Norval, op. cit., p. 184.

<sup>29</sup> C. Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 68, 85, 113 and Francis Fukuyama, “Social capital, civil society and development,” *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 22 no. 1 (2001), p. 8.

<sup>30</sup> Peter Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics: Reimagining the Ummah* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 148-149.

<sup>31</sup> Howarth, “Ideology” op. cit. See also Antonio Gramsci (edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith), *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), pp. 12, 55-56, 262-263 and 333-334.



the basis of common interpretations of their structural positions. However, even the formation of such consent involves a dimension of force. Certain possibilities of identification are made accessible and others excluded.<sup>32</sup>

Hegemony also is a dynamic process. The actors, contests and terrains of struggle remain fluid and shifting. Politics encompasses activities to produce subjects and achieve their recognition by other subjects. It also mediates and maintains boundaries in competition and cooperation with other emerging or changing subjects.

Discourses, even hegemonic ones, are never completely closed or fixed, and therefore always amenable to change. Dislocatory events, structural changes and learning processes occur continuously. A framework may at some stage no longer fulfil its function of stable identification, and may lose the contest to give meaning to the experienced dislocation of identity or to institute appropriate measures.<sup>33</sup>

A new discourse can disarticulate the alignment of forces around which a hegemonic project was based. It can also rearticulate new subjects and a new representation of the unity of society. Such processes of transformation are uneven. Elements of a prior formation are iterative: they may remain and be repeated, but the context in which a repetition is inserted alters them.<sup>34</sup> However, that said, there remains a finite number of possible subject positions and adjustments, due to existing hegemonic relations and horizons of intelligibility.<sup>35</sup>

Symbolic multipliers also make the effects of communication unpredictable. Communication can lead to different interpretations and the autonomous production of meanings.<sup>36</sup> Collective action in itself can become a medium that interacts with the media system.<sup>37</sup>

Compatibility with the historically structured field of cultural symbols, empirical compatibility with everyday experiences, the needs of social coordination and psychic pressures to consolidate identity may all constitute constraints and determine the resonance of a discourse.<sup>38</sup> They may also have a molding and motivating effect on elites.<sup>39</sup> The potential for change is always bigger than the actual capacity for action.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Norval, op. cit., p. 4. For a good combination of the role of discursive struggles for meaning with the role of structures, interaction and political opportunities, see Nancy Whittier, "Meaning and Structure in Social Movements," in David S. Meyer, Nancy Whittier and Belinda Robnett, *Social Movements: Identity, Culture and the State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 289-307.

<sup>33</sup> Melucci, op. cit., pp. 226-227 and Norval, op. cit., pp. 13, 27, 28 and 308 fn. 9.

<sup>34</sup> Norval, op. cit., 325 fn. 139 and Howarth, "Ideology", op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>35</sup> Norval, op. cit., p. 64 and Melucci, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>36</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 228.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 226.

<sup>38</sup> William Connolly, "Democracy and Territoriality" in Marjorie Ringrose and Adam J. Lerner (eds.), *Reimagining the Nation* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), p. 74.

<sup>39</sup> Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 179.

<sup>40</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 185.

## The contextualized emergence of Islam

A dynamic constellation of Islamic discourses form and express the productive, political, organizational and reproductive systems of Muslims and Muslim communities.<sup>41</sup> This section focuses on the contents and features of the productive system in most such discourses.

Interpretations of the Quran, the *Sunnah* (the Prophet's practices) and the experiences of the early Muslim community form a core in Muslim discourses about religion and politics.<sup>42</sup> Current mainstream Islamic tradition explains the emergence of Islam as a revelation of the Word of Allah to Muhammad, the last messenger of Allah, between 610 and 632 in Arabia.<sup>43</sup> Without discarding or defending the divine aspect, the main current explanation among Western scholars is that the message brought by Muhammad was related to the socio-economic and spiritual malaise in Mecca.<sup>44</sup>

A revisionist view is that the Quran and the prophetic doctrine only emerged gradually after the Arab conquests of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries. This emergence occurred in the context of a struggle by the Muslim community for a separate identity and a solid framework of authority in the diverse Abbasid empire, and included a massive backreading and re-interpretation of events by various authors.<sup>45</sup>

At present, information about the first two centuries of Islam are based on texts written more than 100 years after the events they purport to describe, and mostly with the purpose of presenting a history of salvation. Thus, it is very difficult to verify or falsify accounts of Islam's emergence. For purposes of this study, Arkoun's interpretation of early Islamic history is followed.<sup>46</sup>

The monotheist message brought by Muhammad centred on one God, Allah.<sup>47</sup> The message deconstructed the pantheon of the Arabian polytheist religion around the High God, Al-lah, and desacralized the many gods and the polytheist sacred order. However, elements from the polytheist religion, such as the rites of pilgrimage to Mecca, fasting

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-28.

<sup>42</sup> Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics*, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>43</sup> See Fazlur Rahman, *Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) for an overview.

<sup>44</sup> See W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad at Mecca* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953) and Karin Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History* (New York: Modern Library, 2000).

<sup>45</sup> John Wansbrough, *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 51, 160-163 and John Wansbrough, *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978). See also Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 231-245. For a summary of the main criticisms of Wansbrough's tentative findings, see Herbert Berg (ed.), "Islamic Origins Reconsidered: John Wansbrough and the Study of Early Islam," (Special Issue) *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* vol. 9 no. 1 1997 (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1997).

<sup>46</sup> As in the case of early Christianity and early Judaism, new discoveries or changes in intellectual approaches may yet lead to quite different assessments of early Islamic history. See Toby Lester, "What is the Koran?" Part 1, *The Atlantic Monthly* at <http://www.theatlantic.com> January 1999.

<sup>47</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 9, 26-27, 35. See also Mohammad Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam: Common Questions, Uncommon Answers* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), p. 22.

during a period of the year and giving alms to the needy, were included and resacralized in the monotheist framework as three of the five pillars of Islam. The Jinn spirits of polytheism were incorporated too.<sup>48</sup> Both pre-Islamic and eschatological frameworks that drew on Jewish and Christian discourses, would influence the organization, norms and political conflict of the early Muslim community.<sup>49</sup>

New dimensions of this religion included the Arabic scripture, delivered in 114 chapters over two decades, and Muhammad's status as a messenger of God. Muhammad introduced a practice of prostrating prayers to re-educate Muslims about themselves and their relation to God. After it became clear that most of the Jews of Medina did not accept him as a prophet, the direction of prayer was changed from Jerusalem to Mecca, a measure that drew a clear boundary between Islam and other monotheist religions in the region.<sup>50</sup>

Nasr Abu Zaid says that the Quranic text is a message from a divine sender, by means of a linguistic system that embodied cultural conceptions, to a human receiver, the Prophet, who lived in a certain socio-political context. The message of Islam could have an impact on the people who received it first because they understood it in their own socio-cultural context. By individually diverging interpretations and applications of the message their society changed and this process is endlessly repeated over time. Since the message of Islam is believed to be universally valid for all, diversity of interpretation is inevitable.<sup>51</sup>

In response to socio-political concerns and contesting interpretations, the Qur'an was put into writing after the death of Muhammad. Only during the rule of the Abbasid dynasty, after the marginalization of the Mutazilite perspective, the Quran also came to be viewed by most Muslims as the uncreated, eternal and direct word of God.<sup>52</sup>

The compilation of early reports regarding statements by Muhammad and the companions, the *hadith*, also occurred long after Muhammad's death. This process included and excluded elements from diverse cultures. By observing the *Sunnah* in the smallest detail of their lives, Muslims hoped to acquire his interior experience of complete surrender to God, which made him the archetype of the perfect man.<sup>53</sup> The

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<sup>48</sup> The prominence of this theme in the frameworks of Muslims may differ from region to region. See for example Pernilla Ouis, *Power, Person, and Place: Tradition, Modernity, and Environment in the United Arab Emirates* (Lund: Lund University, 2002), pp. 324-325.

<sup>49</sup> Armando Salvatore, *Islam and the Political Discourse of Modernity* (Ithaca Press, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>50</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 5, 15-16. See also Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

<sup>51</sup> Nasr Abu Zaid, "The Textuality of the Koran", a paper delivered at *Islam and Europe: Past and Present*, an academic session held at Wassenaar, Netherlands, 20 September 1996. For a similar position, see Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., pp. 35-40 and Abdel Karim Soroush, "The Evolution and Devolution of Religious Knowledge" in Charles Kurzman, *Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998), pp. 244-251 on pp. 244-245. This perspective is compatible with that of the Mutazilite school in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, which stated that the divine word adjusted itself to language, a product of man, in order to benefit mankind. However, most Muslims today consider the Quran as the eternal, uncreated literal Word of God.

<sup>52</sup> Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 30 and Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 4, 28, 49-55.

<sup>53</sup> Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., pp. 38-39, 41 and Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 51-52, 55. Armstrong also says the *Shariah* has made Muslims internalize the archetypical figure of Muhammad.

*hadith* were considered part of the revelation in the Quran and quantitatively formed the greater part thereof.

The philosophers (*Faylasufs*) and the Sufis, mystics who saw interior Islam as the true foundation of the law, came to the fore during the Abbasid era in societies where discourses from several cultural groups converged.<sup>54</sup> Legal codes were also elaborated in the process of power consolidation by the Umayyad and Abbasid empires. Five law schools, four Sunni and one Shia, then emerged from the interaction between local customs and the *hadith*. The legal codes were sacralized, also retrospectively, until they eventually acquired the status of a religious law, the *Shariah*.<sup>55</sup>

In Sunni Islam, the consensus of the scholars (*ijma*), informed by consultation (*shura*) with the people, analogy (*qiyas*) and new interpretation (*ijtihad*) contributed to the *Shariah*, which became a means to structure and moralize the public sphere.<sup>56</sup> However, it has never been a unanimously accepted code, but only a collection of principles and guidelines on what is moral and legal, sometimes unenforceable in a court of law.<sup>57</sup>

In time a dynamic constellation of Islamic discourses emerged. The constellation was linked by the fundamental sources of the Quran, *Sunnah* and *Shariah*, common symbols and common affective sentiments towards these symbols.<sup>58</sup> However, the construction and deconstruction of discourses occurred in close interaction with the particular socio-political contexts of diverse Muslim actors, who won, lost and maintained zones of power across the world.<sup>59</sup>

Muslim rulers, whose biggest challenges would come from Mongol forces after the 12<sup>th</sup> and Western forces after the 17<sup>th</sup> century, governed the Arabian peninsula, Iraq, Persia/Iran, Egypt, the Levant, the Maghreb and parts of Spain, central and southeast Europe, Turkey and central Asia at various times. The zones of Muslim power also included prepartition India, Malaysia, Indonesia and parts of Africa, areas from which the first Muslims of South Africa would come.

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<sup>54</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 50-64. See also Bernhard Lewis, *The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2000 Years* (Touchstone Books, 1997), chapter 4 and Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>55</sup> Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., pp. 21-22. See also Norman Calder, "Law" in Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy* vol. I part II (London, Routledge, 1996), pp. 979-998 on pp. 984-986.

<sup>56</sup> The Shia tradition was to reject analogy as a systematic means to develop the law. The sayings of the Shia Imams complemented the *hadith* in the emergence of Shi'a legal tradition. Calder, op. cit., pp. 981-982.

<sup>57</sup> Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Islam and Modernities* (London: Verso), p. 54. See also Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 32.

<sup>58</sup> Mohammed Arkoun, "Present-Day Islam Between its Tradition and Globalisation", in Farhad Daftary (ed.), *Intellectual Traditions in Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), pp. 179-221 on pp. 207-208, Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), p. 236 and Aziz Ahmed, "Reconstituting Islam," lecture held on 19 September 1995 at the Center for Christian-Muslim understanding, Georgetown University.

<sup>59</sup> Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 10 and Arkoun, "Present-Day Islam", op. cit., pp. 207-208.

The Islamic discourses that developed, like the nascent Islam of Muhammad's era, was shaped by and articulated through the inclusion or exclusion of elements from non-Islamic discourses, symbolic creativity and changes in direction, emphasis and marginalization, and sacralization and desacralization. However, processes of reification and sedimentation covered some of the contingent aspects of the sources of Islam.<sup>60</sup> It is important to keep in mind that the belief among most Muslims today remains in the revealed, fixed and eternal nature of these sources.

### **Sacred and social orders**

Paden defines religion as a signifier that indicates a variegated domain of different but related behaviours that refer to and engage culturally postulated superhuman powers deemed to be sacred.<sup>61</sup> Different religious paths do not necessarily lead towards the same destiny. Religions have different ends and these ends are not necessarily for the same person at the same time, but for different people and perhaps for the same person at different times.<sup>62</sup>

Religions also create their own versions of world or life-space. For its members, a religious world has two aspects. It is a set of objects imbued through language and practice with transhuman power or significance. The transhuman can be a realm that humans receive through states of awe and gratitude, the numinous aspect. However, even such experiences have a canon in relation to which they are meaningful and restricted.<sup>63</sup>

Therefore, the transhuman experience can also be a system of diverse obligations and loyalties, a sacred order. In this sense it can be a realm that humans relate to through acts of sacrifice, interact with through acts of exchange and prayer, and assert and maintain through acts of protection.<sup>64</sup> A sacred order upholds the integrity of the religious world against violation through an adherence to ritual laws, the exclusion of threats to the sacred objects, and a constant monitoring, negotiation and enforcement of the boundaries of the sacred order's integrity.<sup>65</sup>

A sacred order can concern itself with the full range of human activities, and the distinction between a sacred order and a secular social order may only lie in the sacred

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<sup>60</sup> Smith, op. cit., p. 314 fn 67.

<sup>61</sup> Paden, *Religion, World, Plurality*, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>62</sup> Heim also says that this reality of different ends may be providentially provided by God. However, his privileging of trinitarian Christianity constrains the pluralizing potential of his framework. S. Mark Heim, *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001).

<sup>63</sup> Lars Albinus, "Discourse analysis within the study of religion: Processes of change in ancient Greece", *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* vol. 9 no. 3 (1997), pp. 203-232.

<sup>64</sup> Paden, "Religion, World, Plurality" in Tim Jensen and Mikael Rothstein (eds.), *Secular Theories on Religion: Current Perspectives* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2000), pp. 193-209 on p. 199.

<sup>65</sup> William E. Paden "Sacred Order," *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* Vol. 12 No. 1-2 2000, pp. 207-225 on p. 208. See also Paden, "Sacrality as Integrity: 'Sacred Order' as a Model for describing Religious Worlds" in Thomas A. Idinopulos and Edward A. Yonan (eds), *The Sacred and its Scholars: Comparative Methodologies for the Study of Primary Religious Data* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), pp. 3-18 on pp. 3-5.

order's superhuman authorities as a source of legitimacy.<sup>66</sup> However, the transhuman authorities may give more status and stability to an order and evoke certain practices and dispositions more authoritatively than nonreligious frameworks.<sup>67</sup>

Myth, ritual and symbols play important roles in both aspects of the religious world. A myth entails a set of codes that invest transhuman meaning into social processes and human lives. It can envision ideal environments and conduct, and serve to inspire and mobilize people. Rituals are repetitive patterns of behaviour and communication within a particular framework. They are reminders of communal ties and experiences, and induce particular dispositions in order to construct and reorganize distinctive emotions, conduct and meanings.<sup>68</sup> Symbols convey meaning and provide a vehicle for linkage in the realm of signifiers, which allows a sender to communicate with a receiver. However, to convey a meaning also influences the disposition of the receiver, which in turn changes the abilities of the receiver and the sender.<sup>69</sup>

Three aspects of symbols deserve emphasis. Firstly, symbols often cohere into systems linking myths and rituals, and any participant has to reconstruct this system, which allows hermeneutic dispersion.<sup>70</sup> Secondly, the interpretation of symbols can be more variable than the disciplinary practices of ritual, and they may be incorporated into diverse discourses.<sup>71</sup> Thirdly, the expression of symbols and their related discourses influence and are structured by the formation of groups and historical contests involving nonreligious symbols and socio-political contexts.<sup>72</sup>

Myths, rituals and symbols activate inference systems that influence people's most intense emotions, social interaction, moral feelings and organization into groups. They produce changes in social interaction and people's thinking about interaction.<sup>73</sup> The broader context and its forces also create the conditions within which a religion is experienced and expressed.<sup>74</sup>

According to Paden, a sacred order interacts with a particular social order and is maintained through certain elements: membership, integrity maintenance, territory, bonding and solidarity, tradition, respect for role-status, and hierarchy and authority.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Paden, *Sacrality*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>67</sup> Paden, *Religion, World, Plurality*, op. cit., pp. 203-204.

<sup>68</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., p. 6 and Asad, op. cit., pp. 130, 134. See also Pierre du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace: The Problem of Post-Settlement Violence* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 155-157.

<sup>69</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., p. 6.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>71</sup> Asad, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., pp. 53-54

<sup>73</sup> Pascal Boyer, *Religion Explained: The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), pp. 243-246, 254.

<sup>74</sup> Asad, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>75</sup> Paden, *Sacred Order*, op. cit., pp. 215-219. This is compatible with Durkheim's view that religion is the source of social solidarity and Wilson's view that the function of religion is to produce loyalty to the local survival unit. See Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1915), pp. 218-230 on pp. 227-228, quoted in William Merrin, "Television is Killing the Art of Symbolic Exchange: Baudrillard's Theory of Communication," *Theory, Culture and Society* vol. 16 no. 3

Thus, a sacred order and a social order are intertwined and can be mutually reinforcing. However, both the social and the sacred order are not fixed and monolithic entities, but rather constituted by fluid and diverse relations, interpretations and exchanges in the context of socio-political contests.

Paden's framework can be applied to analyse Islam too.<sup>76</sup> High definition membership, for example, is present in mainstream Sunni Islam. While the entry requirements for prospective Muslims are low, namely the profession of faith (*shahada*), apostasy can incur heavy sanctions. Distinctions between activities that are prohibited and those that are mandatory serve to reinforce the boundaries of membership.<sup>77</sup>

However, in different contexts and periods the boundaries may be drawn differently. Apostasy is generally treated more leniently in Southeast Asia than in Arabia.<sup>78</sup> Boundary markers like clothing have also shown historical variations.<sup>79</sup>

Many Indonesian, Indian and Bosnian Muslims adhere to a heterodox spirituality, which includes practices and beliefs from Buddhism, Hinduism or Christianity respectively.<sup>80</sup> Indigenous African religions have influenced some Sufi orders in Africa.<sup>81</sup>

The boundaries may also be contested. A diversity of mystical ideas and practices are very prevalent in most Muslim areas outside the Arab world, but at the same time groups in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Senegal have waged campaigns and even suppressed varying forms as being outside the monotheist fold of Islam.<sup>82</sup> In addition, groups like the Nation of Islam in the USA, the Druze of Syria and Lebanon, and the Ahmadis of India

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(June 1999), pp. 119-140, and Edward Wilson, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998), pp. 258-260.

<sup>76</sup> Alexander S. Cudsi and Ali Hillel Dessouki, "Introduction" in Alexander S. Cudsi and Ali Hillel Dessouki, *Islam and Power* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), pp. 5-12 on pp. 8-9. See also Muhammad Iqbal's views in Safia Amir, *Muslim Nationhood in India: Perceptions of Seven Eminent Thinkers* (New Delhi: Kamishka Press, 2000), pp. 60, 72-73.

<sup>77</sup> Asad, op. cit., p. 212.

<sup>78</sup> The present heavy penalties are a historical development linked to the identification of the Arab political order's protection with Islam. Nasr Abu Zayd (transl. Melanie Miehl), "Aufklärung in der islamischen Geisteswelt", lecture at the Karl Rahner Academy, Cologne, Germany 27 January 2001, p. 4. See also Ann Nga Longva, "Apostasy and the Liberal Predicament", *ISIM Newsletter* No. 8 September 2001, p. 14.

<sup>79</sup> Veiling for women, for example, was only introduced more than 300 years after the death of Muhammad, incorporating a Greek Christian practice from Byzantium into Islam. Armstrong, op. cit., p. 14. See also Linda Herrera, "Downveiling: Shifting Socio-Religious Practices in Egypt", *ISIM Newsletter* No. 6 October 2000, pp. 1, 32.

<sup>80</sup> See Bernhard J. Trautner, *Pluralität im Südostasiatischen Islam – Extremo Oriente Lux?*, Arbeitspapier 21/2001, pp. 23-25, Sven Cederroth, "Indonesia and Malaysia" in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 253-277 on pp. 258-262 and p. 265, and Robinson, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>81</sup> Westerlund, "Introduction" in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., p. 16. See also chapters 1-4 on Somalia, Nigeria, Senegal and Tanzania.

<sup>82</sup> This prevalence led C.G. Jung to contend that Sufism is the secret backbone of Islam. Nicholas Batty, "Khidr in the Opus of Jung: The Teaching of Surrender", in Joel Ryce-Menuhin (ed.), *Jung and the Monotheisms: Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 166-191 on p. 189. For opposition to Sufism, see D. Westerlund, "Reaction and Action: Accounting for the rise of Islamism," in D. Westerlund and E. Rosander (ed.), *African Islam and Islam in Africa – Encounters between Sufis and Islamists* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1997), pp. 308-334 on p. 310.

are in a grey area outside mainstream Islam, considering themselves Muslim, yet excluded by many Muslims.<sup>83</sup>

Honour in the sense of integrity maintenance is present in the small-scale care with which observance of the five pillars of Islam takes place. However, even this aspect can take on diverse forms. For example, a large Ismaili group, the Daudi Bohras, recognises seven pillars of Islam, including devotion to the Prophet.<sup>84</sup> The greater *Jihad* of the Qur'an, the inner struggle to submit to God, and the smaller *Jihad*, the outer struggle in defence of Islam, form part of integrity maintenance too, and some groups and thinkers have been in favour of considering *Jihad* as a sixth pillar.<sup>85</sup>

Symbolically significant territory certainly plays a role, in mosques, in the holy cities of Medina and Jerusalem, and in the pilgrimage to the Mecca. In addition, there are diverse approaches regarding the veneration of the graves of spiritual guides, and many Shia Muslims privilege cities like Kerbala and Qum too.

Muslim views and emphases regarding places may also change. The Tablighis view the Islamic realm (*dar al-Islam*) as the territory of the soul, but eventually identify it with the home, the local community, and only finally with the pan-Islamic community.<sup>86</sup> France, regarded through the 1970s as realm of war (*dar al-harb*) has become *dar al-Islam* for many believers, or the land of contractual peace (*dar al-'ahd*).<sup>87</sup>

Bonding and solidarity among Muslims are valued in the Qur'an and most Muslim discourses, which accord with Paden's framework. The concept of the community of believers (*ummah*) plays a major role in most Muslim discourses. The Islamic era begins with the community-forming experience of the *Hijra* from Mecca to the later Medina. The sense of community is fostered by the particular key rituals of Islam, the last act of prayer as the Muslim turns to his neighbour on either side, alms-giving to support the community, the joint hardship and sense of community during Ramadan and the celebration of community during the *Hajj*. In addition, the claim that Islam was historically final among revealed religions creates the opportunity to assert and maintain distinctiveness and even a sense of superiority.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> For a short exposition of the Druze, see R. B. Serjeant, "The Religion of the Middle East and North Africa," in *The Middle East and North Africa 1999*, 45th edition (London: Europa Publications, 1999), pp. 26-32. For the beliefs of the Nation of Islam, see Mattias Gardell, *In the Name of Elijah Muhammad: Louis Farrakhan and the Nation of Islam* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

<sup>84</sup> The group has an estimated million followers. Rehana Ghadially, "Women Pilgrims – Boons and Bonds in an Ismaili Sect", *ISIM Newsletter* No. 8, September 2001, p. 25.

<sup>85</sup> Maududi, for example, considers the five pillars merely as a preparation for the task of *Jihad*. Abud A'la Maududi, *Fundamentals of Islam* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1984), p. 243.

<sup>86</sup> Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 153.

<sup>87</sup> Gilles Kepel (transl. Anthony Roberts) *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2002), 197.

<sup>88</sup> Robinson, op. cit., pp. 8, 184 refers in this regard to a sura from the Quran that "might belongs to Allah and his messenger, and the believers."



However, changing balances between bonding as Muslims and differing as interpreters of Islam are present too, with socio-political struggles often underlying apparent contests between adherents of orthodox Sunni Islam, Sufi orders and the various Shia groups.<sup>89</sup>

Interpreted and reinterpreted tradition is very noticeable in Islamic discourses. A prominent example is the importance of the period of Muhammad and the *rashidun* in classical Sunni Islam, reformist and revivalist discourses, and role of lineage from Muhammad in Shia and some Sufi discourses. Amid many Muslim cultures, the use of Arabic script, the Muslim calendar, Islamic decorative patterns, and classical literature and Arabic also contribute to a sense of a common heritage.<sup>90</sup>

Social roles and grids are noticeable in Islam. However, diverse and changing perspectives exist in different contexts. There is a whole spectrum of perspectives on the role of women, including patriarchal discourses in Saudi Arabia, matriarchal discourses in Sumatra and both conservative and feminist ones in Iran.<sup>91</sup>

Authority and hierarchy are present in Islamic discourses. The emphasis on obedience to God and the Qur'an as the Word of God is one example and the authority of Muhammad's practices is another. There is no formal church authority in Islam, but the *ulama* and the Sufi masters have emerged during Muslim history as figures of authority. The authority of the *ulama* and Sufi masters has differed in different historical periods, settings and struggles.<sup>92</sup>

The diverse Islamic discourses in different parts of the world and periods of history involve different understandings of Islam, but may overlap in terms of common symbols or similar affective sentiments. For its adherents a discourse often constitutes a sacred order interacting with the socio-political world.<sup>93</sup> Each discourse remains subject to change, individual reinterpretation and the contest between different Islamic discourses and forms of Muslim identity. Thus, the term Islam designates a constellation of dynamic discourses that constitute sacred orders and also serve as the flexible vehicles of a collective identity and a universalist message, often with political dimensions and effects.

### **Individual, social and communal identities**

Islam does not, like Christianity, have a church as an institutionalised mediator between man and God. The individual acts as the interpreter and believer of God's revelation.

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<sup>89</sup> See Lindblom, op. cit., and Armstrong, op. cit.

<sup>90</sup> Robinson, op. cit., p. 183 and Azmeh, op. cit..

<sup>91</sup> The actual position of women may also differ from discourse to discourse. See Akbar S. Ahmed, *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society* (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 178, 185.

<sup>92</sup> For some examples see John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Makers of Contemporary Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 3-22.

<sup>93</sup> Paden, *Sacred Order*, op. cit., pp. 215-219. See also Mohamed Arkoun, "Religion and Society: The Example of Islam" in Dan Cohn-Sherbok (ed.), *Islam in a World of Diverse Faiths* (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp. 134-177 on p. 167, on the need for an ethno-history in some cases to understand Islam contextually.

In the case of Muslims, the reformist project that started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century promoted a new view of the self. As a response to the stagnation in the Muslim world and contact with Europe, it postulated a new active self and shifted the centre of meaning in life from the next world to this one. Each Muslim had to take action to achieve salvation and create a just society.<sup>94</sup> This had to occur within the parameters of God's message, the community created by God, and the tensions between community obligations and the search for individual fulfillment.<sup>95</sup>

An active self fits in with the needs of complex societies today. Education, better opportunities for political participation, and the more developed communications networks provide individuals with symbolic resources. These resources heighten the potential of individuals for individuation, for attributing meaning to the conditions of their lives and social action. Highly differentiated networks of information, organization and decision-making constitute complex societies and economies, which need the same individuals as core resources of complex information circuits.<sup>96</sup>

The concept of an active self has been incorporated in Islamist and modernist Muslim discourses. However, these discourses can constitute different selves, and such subjects may be more or less compatible with the roles of individuals as resources of complex societies. Tensions and interactions between such individuals, their groups and complex societies may have political effects.

Individuals pursue social identities that form one dimension of a secure sense of self.<sup>97</sup> Social identity has three aspects, namely the continuity of a subject over time regardless of adaptations to the environment, the delimitation of this subject with respect to others, and the ability to recognize and be recognized.<sup>98</sup>

Social identities are constructed through three patterns of social interaction, namely compliance, internalisation and identification. Compliance occurs when an individual conforms to another's expectations or demands in order to secure favourable treatment, but may also influence what one incorporates in one's self-concept. Internalisation occurs when one aligns oneself with others and adopts aspects of their behaviour because it is consistent with one's own values. Identification involves adoption of the behaviour of another actor because such vicarious participation in others' pre-established identities satisfies the individual's need to establish a positive self-concept and feel worthy.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Robinson, op. cit., p. 113 and Aziz Ahmed, *Reconstituting Islam*, lecture 19 September 1995, Center for Christian-Muslim Understanding, Georgetown University. In contrast, Cook sees activism as a dominant discourse throughout the history of Islam. Michael Cook, "Activism and quietism in Islam: the case of the early Murji'a", in Alexander S. Cudsi and Ali Hillel Dessouki, *Islam and Power* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), pp. 15-23 on p. 21.

<sup>95</sup> Robinson, op. cit., pp. 117-119.

<sup>96</sup> Melucci, op. cit., pp. 93, 218.

<sup>97</sup> Jeffrey R. Seul, "'Ours is the Way of God': Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 36 No. 5 September 1999, pp. 553-569 on p. 556.

<sup>98</sup> Melucci, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

<sup>99</sup> Herbert C. Kelman, "The Place of Ethnic Identity in the Development of Personal Identity: A Challenge for the Jewish Family" in Peter Y. Medding (ed.), *Coping with Life and Death: Jewish Families in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 3-26.

Social identity is an interactive process in a network of active relationships and subject positions, constituted also by forms of social organization, models of leadership, and channels and technologies of communication and transmission. Each actor has several changing orientations, but also interacts with a dynamic environment of other actors, opportunities and constraints.<sup>100</sup>

The actors construct a social identity by combining and adjusting three different axes in both cognitive and affective terms. The first axis relates to the ends and meanings of the action, the second to the possibilities and means of the action, and the third axis to relationships with the environment and the field of action.<sup>101</sup>

Social identity is a field that patterns itself according to the varying presence and relative intensity of its relations, axes, representations and recognition by opponents. It often includes constructed memories of the past and aspirations for the future.<sup>102</sup> Constant tensions arise between these elements, as well as between a group's self-recognition and the recognition or non-recognition granted to it by others.<sup>103</sup> Social movements participate in this contest over recognition.

Communal groups are psychological communities: their core members share a distinctive identity that sets the group apart in its own eyes or the eyes of others.<sup>104</sup> The communal identity reflects the hegemony of a particular social identity, carried by a social movement or movements, as well as certain enduring or sedimented traits, resources and heritages that predate the social identity produced by social movements.

People identify with communal groups that can be regarded as worthy.<sup>105</sup> The status of such groups derives from contests between social movements, claiming to represent communal groups, and other groups and institutions. These contests may take place in the public sphere and in the form of frameworks invoking the communal identity group, individual human rights or the principles of a broader community.

There is a wide spectrum of possible relationships between religious and ethnic communal identities. In some cases, religious or ethnic similarities can be stronger than ethnic or religious differences respectively. In other cases, ethnic and religious identities may either be prone to converge or diverge.<sup>106</sup>

Certain interpretations of a universalist religion like Islam may support ethnic, community or nation-state projects, for example in Malaysia, where non-Malay converts

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<sup>100</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 67

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 76.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., pp. 40, 74.

<sup>104</sup> Ted Robert Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), Chapter 1.

<sup>105</sup> Daniel L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 185.

<sup>106</sup> Eickelman and Piscatori, op. cit., p. 107.

also become Malay,<sup>107</sup> the local Layenne Sufi order in Senegal or the nation of Pakistan.<sup>108</sup> Even distinctive secular socio-political conceptions may emerge, which bear the imprint of earlier religious ones and are different from the conceptions held by other secularized ethnic communities, a case in point being the Bosniaks.<sup>109</sup>

Religious interpretations can support or oppose ethnic differentiation within a religious community. Arab Muslims retained a privileged position during its first century and again in certain 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslim discourses.<sup>110</sup> In some Indonesian, Indian and Malaysian circles, care is taken to differentiate the “true Islam” of local interpretations from Arab discourses.<sup>111</sup> However, ethnic or regional identities, powerful in themselves, may also serve as agents for a religious project, like Saudi Arabia’s export of Wahhabism and Iran’s export of Shia doctrines.

Religions can include competing discourses in which certain interpretations of ethnicity are challenged and reconstructed, and similarly in the case of ethnic discourses regarding religions. The broader political environment may indeed contribute to the framework of identities.<sup>112</sup> Failed states and insecurity,<sup>113</sup> as well as competitive drivers among elites, their constituencies or their opponents may play a role too.<sup>114</sup>

As socio-economic security expands, there may be an increasing number of possible individual and social identities and support systems to choose from. However, in times of crisis, people have more limited choices and have to turn for assistance to those they trust and whom they hope will assist them and their families. Communal identity groups have been such groups in conflicts in Palestine, Kashmir and Bosnia.<sup>115</sup>

### **Diverse understandings of social justice**

In analysing the conceptualisations of the *ummah* in Muslim political discourses, the following themes emerge: social justice, human rights, the unity of the *ummah* and

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<sup>107</sup> Iftikhar H. Malik, *Islam, Nationalism and the West: Issues of Identity in Pakistan* (London: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 2, 24, Lewis, *Middle East*, op. cit., p. 88, A.B. Shamsul, “A History of an Identity, an Identity of a History: The Idea and Practice of ‘Malayness’ in Malaysia Reconsidered,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* vol. 32 no. 3 (October 2001), pp. 355-366 and Cederroth, op. cit., pp. 274-275.

<sup>108</sup> James Kurth, “Religion and Ethnic Conflict – In Theory”, *Orbis* vol. 45 no. 2 (Spring 2001), pp. 281-294 on pp. 284-285. Evers Rosander and David Westerlund, “Senegal” in David Westerlund and Ingvar Svanberg (eds) *Islam outside the Arab World* (London: Curzon Press, 1999), pp. 77-96 on p. 83.

<sup>109</sup> Kurth, op. cit., p. 285. For a nuanced description of the Bosniaks, see Kjell Mangnusson, “Bosnia and Herzegovina” in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 295-314 on pp. 308-310.

<sup>110</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 26-27, 35, 39. See also Charles Lindblom, *The Islamic Middle East: An Historical Anthology* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), pp. 81-82, Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 85-87 and As’ad AbuKhalil, *Dead or Alive? The Fate of Arab Nationalism*, unpublished manuscript 2002, pp. 23-24.

<sup>111</sup> Anwar Ebrahim sees less tolerance for ideological and cultural differences in the Islam of the Arab world. Davis, *Between*, op. cit., p. 309.

<sup>112</sup> Milton J. Esman, *Ethnic Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), p. 14.

<sup>113</sup> Barry Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict” in Michael Brown (ed.), *Ethnic conflict and Internal Security* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

<sup>114</sup> Eley and Suny, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>115</sup> Anna Simons, “Making Sense of Ethnic Cleansing,” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* vol. 22 no. 1 (1999), pp. 1-20 on pp. 6, 7 and 14.

religious and political pluralism, egalitarianism and differentiation, space, and social networks and trust.

The promotion of social justice is a prominent theme in many Muslim discourses. However, there are different and contested definitions of social justice in different periods, places and socio-political configurations.<sup>116</sup>

Three sometimes overlapping approaches are noticeable in this regard. One understanding focuses on in-group justice and giving each his due. The accumulation of wealth and power by Arab tribes during the first conquests and what followed thereafter offer a good example. A social Arabism, instead of a proletarian and atheist socialism, is a similar modern example.<sup>117</sup>

This approach considers mutual social responsibility and charity as a solution to social injustice and poverty, while respecting the right to property. It often entails some redistribution of wealth to the poor, without affecting the economic and often political primacy of those who give.<sup>118</sup>

A second reading of justice is that of social equilibrium and the harmonization of rival claims, especially between groups. This interpretation was quite prominent in the Ottoman empire, when society was segmented in different communities and interest groups, and is again prevalent in some Muslim discourses in Malaysia and Turkey.<sup>119</sup>

A third approach holds that the downtrodden and oppressed deserve special consideration and that a more radical restructuring of society is necessary to achieve this purpose. The Shia Mujahedin-e-Khalq of Iran followed this approach, which still acknowledged the supremacy of God and the spiritual dimension of man.<sup>120</sup> Shariati's view of the classless society as the ideal social system and Hanafi's emphasis on socio-economic equalization in accordance with the principle of unity is a related reading. The aim is not merely the formation of an Islamic state, but the implementation of a certain interpretation of Islam in history through the realization of social justice in a community of believer-citizens.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Lewis, *Political Language*, op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>117</sup> Tamara Sonn, "The Islamic Call", in Nimat Barazangi, M. Raquibuz Zaman and Omar Afzal (eds.) *Islamic Identity and the Struggle for Justice* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), pp. 64-76 on pp. 71-73 and Mehdi Mozaafari, *Authority in Islam* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1987), pp. 67-71.

<sup>118</sup> In rich states of the Gulf, it has been possible for rulers to distribute some oil wealth in the form of considerable social welfare and retain great wealth in the ruling families. Ouis, *Power, Person, and Place*, op. cit., p. 327.

<sup>119</sup> The Ottomans included all Muslims, Sunni, Shia, Alawites and others under the Muslim category. Suad Joseph, "Civic Myths, Citizenship, and Gender in Lebanon" in Suad Joseph (ed.) *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2001), pp. 107-136 on p. 111. See also Mahmoud Ayoub, "The Islamic Concept of Justice", in Barazangi et al., op. cit., pp. 19-26 and Mozaafari, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>120</sup> Serif Mardin, "Civil Society and Islam", in John A. Hall (ed.), *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 278-300 on pp. 286, 298 fn. See also Mahmoud Ayoub, "The Islamic Concept of Justice", in Barazangi, op. cit., pp. 19-26.

<sup>121</sup> For Shariati's view, and the distinctions he made between Islam and Marxism, see Ali Shariati (transl. Hamid Algar) *On the Society of Islam* (Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1979), p. 120 and Ali Shariati (transl. R. Campbell), *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies* (Berkeley Press: Mirzan Press, 1980), pp. 87-91. For

Lyotard distinguishes between a notion of justice as a celebration of multiplicity and difference, also in the experiences of others, and a piety that opposes such a plurality and advocates space for one language game only.<sup>122</sup> Most Islamic discourses tend to conceive of justice in the latter way. Religious discourses may play an important role in the determination of justice. However, as Derrida notices, determinate messianisms that seek a justice to come and aim to protect the contents of its revelation, imply the justice of a particular ideology and the potential for violence against those excluded.<sup>123</sup>

## Human rights and Islam

A number of Muslim discourses thus seem to emphasize the communal aspect. The later works of Sayyid Qutb even give absolute priority to the community in Islam. However, there is a strong emphasis on individual human dignity, rights and status in interpretations of the *Shariah* by some late 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslim thinkers.

Most Islamic discourses maintain that man, being created by God, possesses a God-like essence and spiritual nature. In contrast to the Christian doctrine of original sin, most discourses see man as inherently good with the potential for perfection in this life.<sup>124</sup> Nonetheless, the Shia discourse of Khomeini, for example, sees man as a mixture of angel and devil, with the latter part being preponderant. A perfect society is therefore necessary to ensure adherence to the message of Islam.

There are five basic rights that Islam is supposed to guarantee to all members of a Muslim political order. These are the right to life and health, the right to liberty, the right to material and spiritual knowledge, the right to dignity and the right to own property.<sup>125</sup> However, these rights are entirely derived from God and embedded in man's relationship with God. Individuals enjoy them as vice-regents of God and as part of fulfilling their obligations to God. According to most Western discourses, in spite of their theological roots, secularised human rights are derived from the status of being human.<sup>126</sup>

In the initial Western human rights discourses there were different emphases at different times, as contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and two covenants of the UN General Assembly. A distinction is now made between three generations of

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Qutb's view, see Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), pp. 151-152. For Hanafi's view, see Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 234-239.

<sup>122</sup> James K.A. Smith, "Liberating religion from theology: Marion and Heidegger on the possibility of a phenomenology of religion", *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* vol. 46 no. 1 August 1999, pp. 17-33 on pp. 19, 28, 29fn.

<sup>123</sup> James K.A. Smith, "Determined Violence: Derrida's Structural Religion," *The Journal of Religion* vol. 78 no. 2 (April 1998), pp. 197-212 on pp. 201, 207, 209.

<sup>124</sup> David Zeidan, "Typical Elements of Fundamentalist Islamic and Christian Theocentric Worldviews," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* vol. 13 no. 2 (2002), pp. 208-228 on pp. 218-222.

<sup>125</sup> Mahmood Monshipouri, *Islamism, Secularism and Human Rights in the Middle East* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1998), pp. 70-73. Abdurrahman Wahid maintains that these five basic human needs cannot be protected if Islamic universal values do not interact with and absorb other existing civilizations. Mujiburrahman, "Islam and Politics in Indonesia: the political thought of Abdurrahman Wahid," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* vol. 10 no. 3 (1999), pp. 339-352.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid. See also Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 57.

rights. The first generation is that of civil-political rights, including freedom of speech, legal equality and political participation. The second generation of socio-economic rights includes the right to food, work, social security, an adequate standard of living and participation in cultural life and the benefits of scientific progress.<sup>127</sup>

A number of Muslim countries are in favour of the recognition of third-generation human rights, including the right to development, humanitarian aid, peace, a healthy environment and the benefits of a common international heritage. More than 50% of the countries in the Middle East and North Africa have ratified the two UN covenants, but states like Oman and the UAE have not.<sup>128</sup>

*Shariah* interpretations in certain countries may sometimes clash with Western human rights discourses. The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights of the OIC in 1990 acknowledged the legitimacy of gender dignity but not gender equality, and did not exclude discrimination on the basis of religion or the prohibitions on conversion from Islam.<sup>129</sup>

Political antagonism among some Muslim forces towards Western or other Muslim forces may also translate into opposition to human rights discourses. In some cases such clashes may boil down to a choice between an emphasis on communal or individual rights. However, in most Muslim discourses, as in article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the family is emphasised. The latter states that the family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and entitled to protection by society and the state.<sup>130</sup>

### Unity and pluralism

Mainstream Muslim tradition links the emergence of an *ummah* not to the Meccan period of Muhammad, but to the Medinan period.<sup>131</sup> Both the Qur'anic revelation and the situation of the first beleaguered and loose confederacy of tribes in Medina emphasized the need for unity in the Muslim community, which would reflect the unity of God.

Ibn Khaldun says that group consciousness and solidarity or *asabiyya*, based on descent but caused by social intercourse and long familiarity, make possible all great social achievements, from religious reforms to the founding of states. However, *asabiyya* follows a pattern of rise and decline, and in his view, real community solidarity is the exception.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Heiner Bielefeldt, "Muslim Voices in the Human Rights Debate," *Human Rights Quarterly* vol. 17 no. 4 (1995), pp. 587-617 on p. 605.

<sup>130</sup> Bielefeldt, op.cit., pp. 591-592 and Akbar S. Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam: Predicament and promise* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 243.

<sup>131</sup> Muhammad S. El-Awa, *On The Political System of The Islamic State* (Indianapolis: American trust Publications, 1980), pp. 9-10.

<sup>132</sup> Ibn Khaldun (transl. Franz Rosenthal), *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), pp. 213, 246-255. Hourani finds Khaldun's analysis still appropriate today. See Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (New York: Warner Books, 1991), p. 449.

In the Quran and classical Muslim discourses, the term *ummah* is used in both a religious and an ethnic sense, and this is again the case in some 20<sup>th</sup> century discourses. However, the dominant current interpretation of *ummah* is that of the global Muslim community, a space divinely sanctioned and eternally valid.<sup>133</sup>

According to Fathi Osman, plurality in the world and the *ummah* seems to have a base in Quranic discourse too.<sup>134</sup> Some Muslim thinkers distinguish between Khaldun's *asabiyya*, based on common descent, and the group identity of Muslims based on religion. Sabet, however, links the idea of a universal *ummah* and the potential positive forces of *asabiyya* in such a united *ummah*.<sup>135</sup> Similarly, Huntington ascribes an essential unity of aspiration and civilization to the Muslim world.<sup>136</sup>

However, while affective loyalties, especially on issues like Palestine or Western actions in Muslim areas, have shown great similarities, political action has been mainly driven by states and movements rather than by a transnational authority. Until now, the instances of internal rivalries, conflicts and divisions in Muslim history exceed the instances of a united universal *ummah* as a political actor, in line with Khaldun's assessment about the rarity of *asabiyya*.

In spite of this disunity, and perhaps because of it, an emphasis on the unity of the *ummah* seems to dominate Muslim politics in many countries and sometimes legitimises the marginalization of other discourses. In contrast, pluralism may be advocated with reference to examples from early Muslim history, the legitimate divergence of opinions, the role of customary law and the plurality of law schools in the *ummah*'s heritage, the right to interpretation or necessity.

Nevertheless, such diversity may not affect the foundations of the faith radically and must be accommodated in such a way that equilibrium and harmony are achieved.<sup>137</sup> Most Islamic jurists maintain that the truth is one in its essence, but plural in its manifestations.

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<sup>133</sup> Asad, op. cit., pp. 221-222. For different understandings of the concept of the *ummah*, and the effect of socio-political developments on its linkage with the *Shariah* as a basis of identity and loyalty, see Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 18-20, Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 73-74, and Bernhard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 33.

<sup>134</sup> Tamara Sonn, "Introduction," in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 1-26 on pp. 4-5, quoting Sura 11: 118 and 49: 13.

<sup>135</sup> Amr Sabet, *The Islamic Paradigm of Nations: Toward a Neo-Classical Approach* (unpublished manuscript, 2002).

<sup>136</sup> Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of the World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1997). For a short overview of some of Huntington's critics, see Simon Murden, "Huntington and his Critics," *Political Geography* vol. 18 (1999), pp. 1017-1022. For a Muslim review of Huntington's study, see Sulayman S. Nyang's book review in *Islamic Studies* vol. 38 no. 2 (1999), pp. 288-292.

<sup>137</sup> Gudrun Krämer, "Islam and Pluralism", in Brynen, Korany and Noble, op. cit., pp. 113-128 on pp. 115-119. For a discussion of the influence of Greek, Persian and Indian traditions on the development of Islamic frameworks, see Saïd-Amir Arjomand, "Perso-Indian Statecraft, Greek Political Science and the Muslim Idea of Government," *International Sociology* vol. 16 no. 3 (September 2001), pp. 455-473.



Only one meaning is correct, but multiple interpretations are allowed. A minority of scholars maintains that truth is numerous in essence and manifestation.<sup>138</sup>

Some supporters of this view, including the modernist Tatawi and the Islamist Qaradawi, hold that Islam has been compatible with ideological and jurisprudential pluralism, and could therefore be compatible with political pluralism too.<sup>139</sup> Muslim visions of the *ummah* may therefore also entail some tension between unitarian and pluralist poles.

In classical Islamic thought, the *ulama* had textual authority but no institutional power. The state shared no power with a rival institution, but had no legitimising text. The focus was on transforming the community into an *ummah* that followed God's will on earth.<sup>140</sup>

In exceptional cases, according to the classical jurists and later thinkers like Abduh and Qaradawi, the divine commandments may be suspended on the grounds of the interest of the *ummah* (*maslaha*) or necessity (*darura*), but these measures may be withdrawn as circumstances change.<sup>141</sup> For Muslim thinkers like Wahid the *ummah* remain a religious community only, which does not need an Islamic state as such.

However, for others the *ummah*'s task also is to establish an ethically based socio-political order on earth by prohibiting evil and doing good.<sup>142</sup> Ibn Taymiyya concluded that the *ummah* could not be complete without a state to uphold the *Shariah*, defend the *ummah* and spread the faith. The exercise of power was not only a pragmatic necessity, but one of the acts by which man draws near to God.<sup>143</sup>

In addition, translocal experiences and globalisation may change the boundaries of Muslim political community. Some diasporic Muslims are disembedded from national contexts and the religious community becomes the focus of political identity. Classical notions of the domain of Islam are thus recast and the parameters that determine who is permitted to speak on behalf of Islam is widened.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Mona abul-Fadl, "Squaring the Circle in the Study of the Middle East: Islamic Liberalism Reconsidered," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* vol. 8 no. 3 (1991), pp. 541-543.

<sup>139</sup> Azzam Tamimi, "The Origins of Arab Secularism", in Azaam Tamimi and John Esposito, *Islam and Secularism in the Middle East* (London: Hurst and Company, 2000), pp. 13-28 on pp. 18-19 and Joyce M. Davis, *Between Jihad and Salaam: Profiles in Islam* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 233.

<sup>140</sup> S. Parvez Mansoor, "Desacralising Secularism", in Tamimi and Esposito, op. cit., pp. 81-96 on p. 90.

<sup>141</sup> There are differences of opinion on the definition of *maslaha*. See Krämer, op. cit., pp. 118-119 and Enayat, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>142</sup> Fazlur Rahman, "Shura and the Role of the Ummah", in Mumtaz Ahmad (ed.), *State, Politics and Islam* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1986), pp. 87-96 on p. 88. See the section on rulers for a more extensive discussion.

<sup>143</sup> Albert Hourani, *Arabic thought in the liberal age 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 4.

<sup>144</sup> Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics*, op. cit., p. 186.

## Egalitarianism and differentiation

Conceptualisations of the individual can span the spectrum from the more essentialist one of Rahman<sup>145</sup> to that of Esack, who sees the individual composed of multiple selves.<sup>146</sup> According to Islam, every person is created by God and is commanded to serve him, but Islam recognizes differing human capacities and that few individuals have the interest and aptitude to understand or pursue the full reality of human perfection. The *Shariah* stipulates the minimum standards that have to be observed to the extent of one's capacity.<sup>147</sup>

There is a tension within different Muslim discourses between egalitarianism and distinctions among people based on various characteristics. Differentialist discourses among the Arab tribes and urban merchants, the conquered Persians and the conquering Mongols were recombined with egalitarian themes in early Islam, often in the context of socio-political struggles.<sup>148</sup> Today, ethnic and socio-economic differentiation between Muslims occurs in various countries.<sup>149</sup>

In a number of early, classical and even modern Muslim discourses distinctions are drawn between free men and slaves, between men and women, and between Muslims and non-Muslims. Distinctions based on people's insight and capacity are drawn in numerous Shia or Sufi discourses, and in the works of the prominent Muslim thinker Al-Ghazzali and political philosophers like Al-Farabi,<sup>150</sup> while reformist, revivalist and solutionist political thinkers like Afghani, Rida, Maududi, Ghannoushi and Hanafi also distinguish between the masses and the elites or vanguard.<sup>151</sup>

While a given of divine oneness, (*tawhid*) is a traditional concept in Islam exclusively relating to God, Islamists apply this concept to society too. Society must be constructed

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<sup>145</sup> Fazlur Rahman, "Islam's Origin and Ideals", in Barazangi et al, op. cit., pp. 11-18 on p. 13.

<sup>146</sup> Faried Esack, *On Being a Muslim: Finding a religious path in the world today* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1999), pp. 137-138.

<sup>147</sup> William C. Chittick, "The Islamic Concept of Human Perfection," in Ryce-Menuhin, *Jung and the Monotheisms*, op. cit., pp. 154-165 on pp. 157-159.

<sup>148</sup> See Louise Marlow, *Hierarchy and Egalitarianism in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), Rahman, *Islam's Origin and Ideals*, op. cit., pp. 17-18, Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*, op. cit., pp. 64-65 and Lindholm, op. cit., pp. 81-83, 100-104, 213-244.

<sup>149</sup> See for example Laura Dudley Jenkins, "Becoming Backward: Preferential Policies and Religious Minorities in India," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol. 39 No. 1 July 2001, pp. 32-50 on pp. 37-39.

<sup>150</sup> Zayd, *Aufklärung*, pp. 9, 12-13, Hans Daiber, "Political philosophy", in Nasr and Leaman, op. cit., Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy* vol. I part II (London, Routledge, 1996), pp. 841-885 on p. 858, and Mahmud Erol Kilic, "Mysticism", in Nasr and Leaman, op. cit., pp. 947-958 on pp. 951-952.

<sup>151</sup> For Afghani and Rida, see Nikki R. Keddie, "Sayyid Jamal al-Din 'al-Afghani'," in Ali Rahnema, *Pioneers of Islamic Revival*, p. 11-29 on pp. 23, 25. For Maududi, see El-Affendi, op. cit., p. 51 and for Ghannoushi see Mohamed Elhachmi Hamdi, *The Politicisation of Islam: A Case Study of Tunisia* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 81-82. For Hanafi, see Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 234-239.

to reflect this divine oneness so that class or ethnic differences do not play a role and a political authority is not autonomous.<sup>152</sup>

The ideal of a united *ummah* continues to motivate and legitimise particular socio-political struggles and creates a space in discourses for the expression of collective identity and sentiments. However, the concept of the *ummah* itself is contested in various discourses and is of limited use to explain events in the Muslim world. The contexts and forces of individual ambitions and frameworks, political and economic rivalries, and contesting discourses of ethnic, cultural or religious group identity are more important in this regard.

### Space and place

All human activity that is historical is situated in a physical territory or space with contesting imagined places. Different groups endow spaces with different meanings, memories, authorities and identities in the course of contests.<sup>153</sup> Muslim politics may involve the interaction in places like households, families and the sites of religious practice. "Locality" may refer to persons physically removed, for example students overseas, labour migrants and emigrants. Muslim groups which do not form a majority in a country may be compact minorities, that is, concentrated in certain areas, or diffuse minorities.<sup>154</sup>

At the sites of religious practice, frameworks are articulated that constitute and reproduce community life. Mosques and shrines are multidimensional spaces in which faith and social life are explicitly or tacitly combined. They can also reproduce diverse understandings of Islam.<sup>155</sup> Mass education, television and the internet in many societies have diversified communicative authorities and abilities. A local space can become the site of competition between various combinations of local, national and transnational discourses.<sup>156</sup>

Ibn Khaldun understood the concept of the *ummah* in a socio-historical sense and linked it to territory, in that it tends to last longer than a state.<sup>157</sup> However, the increased means for global communication and travel signify that Muslim communal and political identities are also configured in and between multiple political spaces. These translocal spaces bring together Muslims of diverse backgrounds, which may have several political consequences.

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<sup>152</sup> O. Roy (transl. Carol Volk), *The Failure of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994), op. cit., pp. 40-41.

<sup>153</sup> Paul Routledge, "Critical geopolitics and terrains of resistance", *Political Geography*, Vol. 15 No. 6/7 1996, pp. 509-531 on pp. 519-520 and J. Macgregor Wise, "Home: Territory and Identity", *Cultural Studies*, vol. 14 no. 2 (April 2000): 295-310.

<sup>154</sup> Gabriel Ben-Dor, "Minorities in the Middle East: Theory and Practice," in Bengio and Ben-Dor, op. cit., pp. 1-28 on p. 7-9.

<sup>155</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islam in South Africa: Mosques, Imams and Sermons* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1999).

<sup>156</sup> Eickelman and Piscatori, op. cit., p. 137.

<sup>157</sup> Nazih Ayubi, *Political Islam: Religion and Politics in the Arab World* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 21.

Diasporic communities, border zones and spiritualist movements challenge the relationship between a community's presence in a constitutive territory, identity practices and primary loyalties. Diasporic communities may reproduce and reformulate identity practices that include the affiliation to different locales, for example Turks in Germany and Algerians in France.

The practices and combined identities of groups living in border zones may challenge official configurations of territory and identity, as is the case of the Kurds in Iran, Iraq and Turkey, or the Pashtuns in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Spiritualist movements like the Tablighi Jamiat may locate its identity neither within nor outside the state, and its practices and moral community may implicitly constitute a powerful critique of political systems.<sup>158</sup>

A number of transnational actors can become arenas where national or local actors pursue their objectives and proxy struggles occur. Other consequences may be an increased awareness of differences and divisions.<sup>159</sup> Contests between different universalist discourses may occur, for example between jihadist, Sufi and Tablighi adherents.<sup>160</sup>

### **Social capital**

Already in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the jurist Ibn Taimiya remarked that government is based on two fundamentals, namely power and trust.<sup>161</sup> Ibn Khaldun saw the rise of the state as an outcome of social capital and cooperation, because people stood to benefit more that way.<sup>162</sup> Where group networks lose or do not gain trust in the state, they may also serve as a substitute for the state as far as prime identity, trust, loyalty and services like security are concerned.

Complex societies have no centre, but are networks of relations among differentiated and relatively autonomous structures which they must keep in balance.<sup>163</sup> The society that the state has to address may be constituted of diverse social movements and distinctive

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<sup>158</sup> Mandaville, op.cit., pp. 8, 10, 13-14.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., pp. 186-187.

<sup>160</sup> Eickelman and Piscatori, op. cit., p. 163.

<sup>161</sup> Khan, op. cit., p. 147. See also Adam Seligman, *The Problem of Trust* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 14.

<sup>162</sup> Mustapha Kemal Pasha, "Ibn Khaldun and World Order" in Stephen Gill and James H. Mittelman (eds) *Innovation and Transformation in International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 56-70 on p. 60.

<sup>163</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 208. See also Bourdieu on society as a plurality of social fields and different struggling actors. Martti Siisiäinen, "Two Concepts of Social Capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam", Paper presented at ISTR Fourth International Conference *The Third Sector: For What and for Whom?* Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland, July 5-8, 2000, p. 10.

communities.<sup>164</sup> Unequal social relationships and interests condition the political field and are mediated through politics.<sup>165</sup>

With reference to Putnam<sup>166</sup> and Bourdieu,<sup>167</sup> social capital is defined here as relationships connected to group membership in which informal norms that promote cooperation between individuals and trust are present. Social capital can be produced by repeated interaction, shared historical experience and hierarchical sources of authority, including religions. In the latter case, norms are also transmitted between generations through socialization that involves much more habit than reason.<sup>168</sup>

The circle of people among whom co-operative norms are operative, or so-called radius of trust, may be bigger than the group with social capital, or smaller, for example in elitist organizations.<sup>169</sup> Social capital has an important emotional dimension: durable networks of shared affective commitments, identification and solidarity, as well as currents of distrust and hostility.

Antagonistic relations, authoritative internal structures and non-democratic ideologies among groups with social capital may inhibit or challenge democratic political orders.<sup>170</sup> Social capital is based on mutual recognition in the productive symbolic sphere. However, behind a generalized trust and ideas of sacrifice and reciprocity there may be particular interest groups.<sup>171</sup>

Individuals may emotionally disinvest from groups with their demands and risks. Social movements are often involved in a contest with other networks for the limited emotional energy of their participants, and engaged in evoking or channelling certain emotional states among their participants and opponents.<sup>172</sup>

The concept of civil society refers to intermediary structures in the public sphere between the private sphere and the central political institutions.<sup>173</sup> However, in most political

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<sup>164</sup> Klaus Eder, *Kollektive Akteure zwischen Identitätssuche und Mobilisierungsindustrie. Oder: wie man kollektive Akteure wieder theoriefähig macht*, Diskussionspapier 3-90, Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung, 1990, p. 39. Anna Yeatman, *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political* (London: Routledge 1994), pp. 108-113.

<sup>165</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>166</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1993). See also Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling alone: America's declining social capital" *Journal of Democracy* vol. 6 no. 1 (1995), pp. 64-78. Fukuyama defines social capital as an instantiated informal norm that promotes cooperation between two or more individuals. According to this definition, trusting relationships emerge from social capital but do not constitute social capital. Fukuyama, op. cit., pp. 7-20 on p. 7.

<sup>167</sup> Siisiäinen, op. cit.

<sup>168</sup> Fukuyama, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>170</sup> Dirk Berg-Schlosser, "The Role of Civil Society concerning the Survival or Breakdown of Democracy in Interwar Europe", ODIS-Lecture, Brussels, November 29, 2003.

<sup>171</sup> Siisiäinen, op. cit., pp. 11-14.

<sup>172</sup> Mustafa Emirbayer and Jeff Goodwin, *Symbols, Positions, Objects: Toward a New Theory of Revolution and Collective Action*, Center for Studies of Social Change, October 1995, pp. 7-8.

<sup>173</sup> Berg-Schlosser, "Civil Society", op. cit.

orders of sub-Saharan Africa there is a limited distinction between private and public domains, and clientelist and identity relations and considerations permeate actors outside the formal state structures.<sup>174</sup> Thus, it may make more sense to keep to social capital rather than civil society as an area of analysis.

### **Authority and the specialist interpreters of Islam**

Authority is linked to a relation of trust between people, and is an effect of a posited, perceived or institutionally ascribed asymmetry between the speaker and the audience. It is characterized by unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey without the need for persuasion or coercion.<sup>175</sup>

While in principle indivisible, from early on the *ulama* or religious scholars were distinguished from the *qadis*, who gave legal decisions and administered the courts of law under the authority of secular rulers, and the *fuqaha*, who were solely concerned with the study of jurisprudence and conceived their role as advice-givers only as they were not remunerated by their rulers.<sup>176</sup>

Some thinkers like Qutb and Hanafi have also maintained that every individual Muslim can interpret Islam as authoritatively as the specially educated *ulama*. Especially in Sunni Islam, educated lay people without formal training as *ulama* have sometimes played authoritative roles as interpreters of Islam.

The *ulama*'s authority rests on religious education and knowledge, and Sufi masters' authority rests on spiritual reputation, lineage connections with predecessors and miraculous powers.<sup>177</sup> Both *ulama* and masters are mostly interpreters of the universal quest for meaning. However, some Sufi masters may also be interpreters of the quest to explain and control events in the physical world with reference to a hidden, spiritual reality.<sup>178</sup>

Sufi masters and magicians, like the *dukun* of Indonesia and the Western Cape, may affect the authority of orthodox *ulama*. Widespread education and new communications media have provided university-educated thinkers, lay preachers and websites to fulfil some of the roles of guidance previously filled by the *ulama* and Sufi masters. Simultaneously, some *ulama* and Sufi masters used these means to reinforce and extend their authority, or rebel against other forces in power.<sup>179</sup> However, the absence of a truly institutionalised church, and the new opportunities and means to educate and

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<sup>174</sup> P. Chabal and J.-P. Deloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), pp. 17-30.

<sup>175</sup> Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jorantovich, 1969), p. 215.

<sup>176</sup> Turner, *Weber and Islam*, op. cit., pp. 115-119.

<sup>177</sup> David Westerlund, "Introduction", in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

<sup>178</sup> Richard Horton, *Patterns of thought in Africa and the West: essays on magic, religion and science* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 343-348.

<sup>179</sup> See Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson, *New Media in the Muslim world: The Emerging Public Sphere* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999). For a similar process when the printing press was introduced, see Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, op. cit., chapter 3, pp. 66-104.

communicate, have in a number of cases allowed for a dispersion of religious authority among Muslims.

### **Religion, politics and the public sphere**

Over time the Qur'anic *din* accumulated multi-dimensional meanings, but doctrinal teaching about God tended to be less important than social practices. The *din* signified an act of personal commitment to a transcendent God, but provided a persistent focus on building a community that lived in social justice, reflecting the will of God while awaiting the Day of Judgement.<sup>180</sup> It therefore constituted a constant means to translate transcendent norms into a social system with political effect.<sup>181</sup> However, sovereignty was not located in the caliph or the *ummah*, but in God's will, as expressed in the *Shariah*.

The *Shariah* is not a code, but an ensemble of precedents and general principles, interpreted by different and mutable narratives in diverse contexts. It mostly deals with the rights of persons and also encompasses a much smaller body of public law described as the rights of God, which deals with the protection of the *ummah* through international relations, the suppression of doctrinal threats and the creation of sound legal relations in the *ummah*.<sup>182</sup>

In many political orders Islam has become a medium for moralizing public life. However, this is often not a one-directional process. In practice, different communities may adhere to customary law too, for example Indonesian, Berber, Kurdish, Somalian, Yemeni and Pukhtun communities. Muslims may also have recourse to secular law because the *Shariah* did not address particular practical needs, but maintain reverence towards the *Shariah*.<sup>183</sup>

The state appears to play a strong role in many Sunni Muslim countries and dominant discourses. In contrast, a number of Sunni thinkers, even Islamists promoting a role for Islam in the public sphere, actually envisage a limited pedagogical role for the state, namely to make men virtuous. Maududi and Hanafi envision the new Islamic order less as a form of state than a form of Islam.<sup>184</sup>

Roy refers to a polarity among activists between Islamism and neofundamentalism. The latter concentrates on a socio-educational re-Islamisation from below. Re-Islamisation occurs in the form of changed individual behaviour and dress, or the establishment of Islamised spaces and networks, replete with socio-economic structures, especially where there is insufficient state support.<sup>185</sup> The focus is on the implementation of *Shariah* and

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<sup>180</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 6, 20, 56. See also Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 17, 49.

<sup>181</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>182</sup> Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, op. cit., pp. 10-13, 66, 131-133.

<sup>183</sup> See Sven Cederroth, "Indonesia and Malaysia", in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 253-277 on p. 258, Ahmed, *Discovering Islam*, op. cit. pp. 179-181.

<sup>184</sup> See Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the making of Islamic revivalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1996), pp. 50, 60, Roy, op. cit., pp. 63-64 and Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 234-239.

<sup>185</sup> Roy, op. cit., pp. 79, 82.

daily morality, which will guarantee the advent of a perfect society and the reign of justice.<sup>186</sup>

Thus, the public space can shrink to the family and the mosque.<sup>187</sup> According to some Sunni Islamist discourses, as society becomes more virtuous and the active *Shariah*, lived and internalised, is established as the only norm for social relations, the state and the role of rulers will shrink. They reject the autonomous space of politics that the *ulama* historically accepted.<sup>188</sup>

The most influential Sunni Islamist thinkers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Banna, Qutb and Mawdudi saw Islam as more than just the *Shariah* implemented, as a totalising ideology that must first transform society before *Shariah* may be established.<sup>189</sup> Qutb spoke of a jurisprudence in motion, resulting from the interpretation of those who fight for Islam in changing social contexts, which he contrasted with the fixed scholastic jurisprudence of the *ulama*. In a truly Islamic society, the state could innovate on subjects outside the *Shariah*, so that the implementation of the *Shariah* formed only part of the broader Islamisation of society.<sup>190</sup>

El-Awa says that the fulfilment of the people's interests in an Islamic system should lead to the establishment of faith, which differs from the temporal character of public interest in the secular state. These interests precede the existence of the Muslim community or Islamic state and can therefore not be determined at will by them.<sup>191</sup>

There are multiple forms of Islamism today that consider Islam as a solution to problems in the public sphere but express different agendas. Fuller concludes that Islamism produces the primary vehicles and the vocabulary of most political discourses in the Muslim world. He attributes this state of affairs to the fact that the opposition sphere in Muslim countries of the Middle East are mostly dominated by Islamists, who enjoy the luxury of not having been tested in government. In contrast, Roy and Kepel hold that Islamism is a declining force.<sup>192</sup>

While many Islamists see re-Islamisation as a social project first and then as a political or state-building project, Muhammad Khalafallah even states that a just social order does not need to be in an Islamic state. This is demonstrated by Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries who practice the *din* and perform *zakat*.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid., pp. 75-76.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-83.

<sup>188</sup> Roy, op. cit., 63-64.

<sup>189</sup> For a critical view of the Islamic state theory, see Ayubi, op. cit., p. 17.

<sup>190</sup> John Esposito, *Islam and Politics* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1987), pp. 134-136, Ahmad Moussali, *Radical Islamic Fundamentalism- The Ideological and Political Discourse of Sayyid Qutb* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1992), and Roy, op. cit., pp. 36, 38.

<sup>191</sup> Awa, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

<sup>192</sup> Compare Graham Fuller, "The Future of Political Islam," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 82 no. 2 (March/April 2002), pp. 48-60 on p. 55, Roy, op. cit. and Gilles Kepel, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2002), p. 376.

<sup>193</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 212-215, 219-220.



This brings to the fore the position of Muslim minorities in Western countries. In these countries, secularism has in modern times served some of the traditional functions of a religion in public domain, including the promotion of social cohesion. However, in such cases, secularism has remained distinct from a religion based on God's transcendence, and the latter has often been essentialised and confined to a private sphere. This process has in any case promoted a distinction between different types of religion, as well as between private and public spheres, not only between politics and religion.<sup>194</sup>

However, a tense and dynamic relationship remains between the symbolic framework that is removed to a sphere of inwardness and acts as the foundation for religious communities on the one hand, and a public community and secularist symbolic framework that legitimises the modern state on the other.<sup>195</sup> In different Western democracies, the relations between these frameworks may differ.

A state may separate the two spheres completely, or it may allow secular political autonomy and religious autonomy too, by not interfering in the religious sphere. Alternatively, a state may have a state religion, give recognition to certain religions but not to others, allow religious authorities to perform valid civil law functions although the religions are not recognized, define certain religious communities as not being religious at all, or combine these relations. In countries like France, secularism may also entail anticlerical values.<sup>196</sup>

In industrialized countries a broad range of private activities and social practices must today be coordinated by public means.<sup>197</sup> The relation between church and state would be better characterized then, not as a separation, but as a series of intersections and interdependencies mediated by institutional distinctions and linkages. In this regard, Western secularism is an ambiguous phenomenon that confronts theism on some planes and absorbs its legacy into secular vocabularies and practices on others.<sup>198</sup> In Iran and Saudi Arabia too, the state defines the place of the clergy and the *Shariah*. Secularisation of worldviews and culture has not occurred, but secularisation of processes and institutions has occurred.<sup>199</sup>

Arkoun rightly remarks that separate legislative, judicial, executive and spiritual powers all retain links with their roots in fundamental questions about being and values.<sup>200</sup> Also,

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>196</sup> Lars Pedersen, "Islam in the Discourse of Public Authorities and Institutions in Denmark", in W.A.R. Shahid and P.S. van Koningsveld (eds.), *Muslims in the Margin: Political Responses to the Presence of Islam in Western Europe* (Kampen, Kok/Pharos 1996), pp. 202-217 and John L. Esposito, "Islam and Secularism in the Twenty-First Century," in Azzam Tamimi and John L. Esposito (eds) *Islam and Secularism in the Middle East* (London: Hurst and Company, 2000), pp. 1-12 on p. 9.

<sup>197</sup> William Connolly, "The Dilemma of Legitimacy" in William Connolly, *Legitimacy and the State*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984), pp. 222-249 on p. 223.

<sup>198</sup> William Connolly, *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), p. 145.

<sup>199</sup> Monshipouri, op.cit., p. 213.

<sup>200</sup> Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 23. See also William Connolly, *Why I am not a secularist* (Mineapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

even though young Muslims in Europe are secularising fast in the sense of relative low participation in prayers, their communal tradition and negative responses by other groups act to prevent assimilation.<sup>201</sup>

### **Religious identity politics and conflict**

Religion can become involved in identity politics in several ways. First, religions can provide a source of legitimacy for political actors and actions, and be perceived by other actors as a challenge to their legitimacy.<sup>202</sup> Second, religious institutions can be used to mobilize people for political purposes and to articulate grievances.<sup>203</sup> Third, a religious framework of interpretation and meaning often becomes a part of the identity and perceived interests of those who employ the framework. Thus, a perceived challenge to the framework or its adherents elicits a response.<sup>204</sup> Fourth, religions usually include behavioural prescriptions, which can be interpreted as requiring political activism.<sup>205</sup>

Multiple identifications and identity markers are possible, but the psychological essence of intergroup differentiation is the 'us-them' dynamic.<sup>206</sup> Religion frequently supplies the fault line along which intergroup identity and resource competition occur, because religion speaks more deeply to the identity impulse that underlies the 'us-them' syndrome than any other identity marker.<sup>207</sup>

The primary causes of ethnic conflicts are non-religious ethnic issues, but the majority of ethnic conflicts involve religious issues. Religion can cause ethnic conflicts when one group threatens the religious beliefs of an ethnic group, or when religious interpretations call for conflictive action. Religious institutions and legitimacy often play a role in facilitating conflict. They have the potential to increase the violence of an ethnically-motivated conflict and can influence the role religion plays in society.<sup>208</sup>

During a conflict people feel a bond with others, which enables them to make sense of what they are doing and to affirm themselves as subjects of their action.<sup>209</sup> If group members want a differential apportionment of status, prestige and symbolic recognition,

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<sup>201</sup> Mustafa Malik, "Islam in Europe: Quest for a Paradigm", *Middle East Policy* vol. VIII no. 2 (June 2001) at [http://www.mepc.org/journal/0106\\_malik.htm](http://www.mepc.org/journal/0106_malik.htm)

<sup>202</sup> Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War?* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993). Seymour Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (New York: Anchor Books, 1963) holds that religion is only likely to add to legitimacy to the extent that it is an acceptable and capable means of resolving issues.

<sup>203</sup> Jeff Haynes, *Religion in Third World Politics* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994).

<sup>204</sup> R. Scott Appleby, *Religious Fundamentalisms and Global Conflict* (New York: Foreign Policy Association Headline Series, 1994), p. 15.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 46.

<sup>207</sup> Seul, op. cit., p. 565. In contrast, Gurr maintains that religion is at best a contributing factor in communal conflict. Gurr 1993, op. cit., p. 317.

<sup>208</sup> Jonathan Fox, "The Ethnic-Religious Nexus: The Impact of Religion on Ethnic Conflict," *Civil Wars* vol. 3 no. 3 (Autumn 2000), pp. 1-22 on pp. 18-19.

<sup>209</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 74.

the intensity of preferences may make intercommunal compromise and the exchange of one value for another very difficult.<sup>210</sup>

### **The spectrum of relations between rulers, *ulama* and Sufi shaykhs**

Muslim politics involve the competition over both the interpretation of Islamic symbols and control of the formal and informal institutions that produce them.<sup>211</sup> Diametrically opposed Muslim political approaches can be articulated by different authorities in the same language and set of symbols, and these authorities can include rulers, *ulama*, Sufi shaykhs, Muslim protest movements and kin groups.<sup>212</sup> Historically, Muslim scholar-activists who are not *ulama* or Sufi shaykhs<sup>213</sup> have followed one or more approaches towards their existing political order, and the *ulama* and Sufi shaykhs have done so too.

Political quietism has formed the first approach. Especially the *qadis* were heavily influenced by various pressures from secular authorities. The *Shariah* as a system of law was continuously weakened and penetrated by patrimonial intervention, and became an eclectic body of rulings in interaction with its socio-political context.<sup>214</sup>

Another approach has been that the *ulama* or shaykhs act as community leaders and as intermediaries between a community and the ruler. The particular approach may be influenced by ruler patronage or control of religious education and welfare foundations, for example during the Mamluk period (1260-1517) and in a number of Middle Eastern countries today.<sup>215</sup> The *ulama* may also be funded by the religious establishment but headed by a state-appointed senior *alim*, as in multi-confessional Lebanon today, or be completely free from the ruler's patronage.

The third approach has been for the religious specialists to actively support the ruler. In Senegal some Sufi shaykhs and orders have extended the authority of a weak ruler to the countryside and influenced people to vote for the ruling party.<sup>216</sup> The ruler may also come to rely on the *ulama*. In Saudi Arabia the ruler has had to turn to the *ulama* to weaken cultural resistance to particular education programs for women, and *ulama* played the most influential role in persuading the ruler regarding certain facets of foreign policy.<sup>217</sup>

However, a fourth approach could be for the religious specialists to try to weaken and replace the ruler in various ways. Sufi orders in modern Turkey have infiltrated the state

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<sup>210</sup> Donald L. Horowitz, *Structure and Strategy in Ethnic Conflict*, paper prepared for the Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics, Washington DC, April 20-21, 1998, p. 32.

<sup>211</sup> Eickelman and Piscatori, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., op. cit., p. 18 and Salvatore, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>213</sup> Rashid Ghannouchi in Tunisia, Abdurrahman Wahid in Indonesia and Hasan al-Turabi in Sudan are some recent examples of influential scholar-activists. See John L. Esposito and John O. Voll, *Makers of Contemporary Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>214</sup> Bryan S. Turner, *Weber and Islam: A critical study* (London: Kegan Paul, 1974), pp. 117, 119.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., pp. 101, 111.

<sup>216</sup> Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 82, 84, 94. However, the marabout spiritual leaders of the Mouride order in Touba, Senegal have such authority that Touba virtually constitutes a state within a state.

<sup>217</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban – The Story of the Afghan Warlords* (London: Pan Books, 2001), p. 201.

administration in order to Islamise it, or alternatively to focus on building a religious community inside the state, which consciously but only implicitly constitutes a challenge to the secular political order.<sup>218</sup> In those more peripheral areas where the ruler's power could be circumvented, *ulama* built the Wahhabi counter-movement to the ruler in 18<sup>th</sup> century Arabia. In a number of countries *ulama* have also been prominent in political opposition parties, for example in Indonesia and Pakistan.<sup>219</sup>

Such a challenge to a Muslim ruler has taken the form of strong and delegitimising moral criticism or a demand for political rule based on the *Shariah*. In Shia Islam, Khomeini even claimed in his theory of *velayat-i-faqih* that only the *ulama* who know the *Shariah* can validly govern.<sup>220</sup> A challenge to the ruler may entail violence, like the Sufi orders that led rebellions against Manchu rule in parts of China in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>221</sup>

Such challenges have extended to non-Muslim rulers too. *Ulama* supported or led resistance movements fighting Dutch colonialism in Sumatra and Aceh in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Ulama* and Sufi shaykhs led the resistance to Russian colonialism in Afghanistan and Chechnya in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, while Muslims claiming to be messianic leaders also led religiously-legitimated resistance movements to British colonialism in Sudan.<sup>222</sup>

Rulers have sometimes been able to control the *ulama*, but have failed in a number of cases to control Sufi brotherhoods and beliefs.<sup>223</sup> A fifth approach may therefore be that Sufi orders reconstruct the public sphere at a sub-state level and even have zones of semi-autonomy, as in 15<sup>th</sup> century Central Asia and modern Somalia and Afghanistan.<sup>224</sup>

A sixth approach has been that of building transnational movements, loyalties and public spheres, for example by the Khilafat movement in India, the Tablighi Jama'at and various Sufi orders.<sup>225</sup> In such cases, the religious specialists may enjoy the support, neutrality and fierce opposition of different rulers in different countries.

Sunni discourses differ on the political leader's right to religious interpretation vis-à-vis the *ulama*. In many Sunni discourses, the *ulama* have the primary right of religious interpretation, and while rulers in Saudi Arabia and Iran may override the *ulama*'s advice, this is based on interpretations of public interest rather than the *Shariah* as such.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 133, 136.

<sup>219</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>220</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., p. 148. See also Lewis, *Middle East*, op. cit., p. 78. For a discussion of Khomeini's theory, see Ahmad Moussavi, "The theory of Vilayat-i-Faqih: Its origin and appearance in Shi'ite juristic literature" in Ahmad, op. cit., pp. 97-113.

<sup>221</sup> Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., p. 199.

<sup>222</sup> L. Carl Brown, *Religion and the State: The Muslim Approach to Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), pp. 102-105. See also Rashid, *Taliban*, op. cit., p. 97.

<sup>223</sup> Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 156, 163-164.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., pp. 45-46 and 169, 179.

<sup>225</sup> Marc Gaborieu, "Transnational Islamic Movements: Tablighi Jama'at in Politics?" *ISIM Newsletter* no. 3 July 1999, p. 21.

<sup>226</sup> Azmeh, op. cit., pp. 153-154.

Sunni Islamists also have a spectrum of views on the role of the *ulama*. Sunni Islamists sometimes reproach the *ulamas* for accommodating Western modernity and accepting secular rule and legislation that do not reflect the Shariah. However, Yusuf al-Qaradawi says that the *ulama* are the only legitimate leaders and interpreters of the Islamic awakening, and a dispute of interpretation of the *Shariah* should be resolved by a public critical discussion between the jurists. The implementation of the *Shariah* is a responsibility of the people before it is one of the state.<sup>227</sup>

In contrast, Turabi maintains that an elected government could arbitrate between different interpretations of the *Shariah*.<sup>228</sup> Ghannoushi argues that the opinions of the *ulama* should enter the public sphere and a political community should have the right to vote for or against the political implications of any given textual interpretation.<sup>229</sup> Likeminded theoreticians accord the political leader (*amir*) the right to religious interpretation, a greater competency than that of the *ulama*, while others limit this right to a political leader who has actual religious training.<sup>230</sup>

Among the Ithna'ashari Shia, the ruler became an interpreter of *Shariah* and later an infallible interpreter.<sup>231</sup> Among the Ismaili Shia, the ruler was considered to be not only an interpreter of divine law, but a source of divine law. In the Mujahedin-e-Khalq of Iran and in Libyan Kaddafism, God and the people are fused as the source of authority, and the *ulama* as interpreters of the divine law excluded.<sup>232</sup>

The relations between the religious specialists, the *ulama* and Sufi shaykhs, and political rulers, show an ever-changing diversity, depending on local, changing power configurations and struggles. In the absence of a central religious authority, the approaches of political leaders, *ulama* and Sufi shaykhs can often diverge.<sup>233</sup>

### **The caliphate in Sunni Muslim thought**

Muhammad established a religious-political order and combined the position of political and spiritual leader. The period of Muhammad and the four so-called rightly-guided caliph-successors or *al-khulafa ar-rashidun*, Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali, forms a

<sup>227</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 203-206.

<sup>228</sup> El-Affendi, op. cit., p. 52. For a contextualized analysis of Hassan Turabi's thought, see Esposito and Voll, *Makers*, op. cit., pp. 118-149.

<sup>229</sup> Mandaville, *Transnational Muslim Politics*, op. cit., p. 183.

<sup>230</sup> Roy, op. cit., pp. 42-44.

<sup>231</sup> Khomeini, acting within Shia solutionist discourse, even went so far as to claim that the upholding of the revolutionary Islamic state led by the *ulama* took precedence over the implementation of the *Shariah*. El-Affendi, op. cit., p. 55.

<sup>232</sup> See the same source for the similar fusionist approach in Khaddafism, which accepts the Quran, but rejects the *fiqh*, the law schools and the need for *ulama* completely.

<sup>233</sup> In some cases rulers have used competition and differences between the *ulama* and the Sufi shaykhs to promote their rule.

central paradigm for many 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Sunni Muslim discourses about the relations between religion and politics, also in the Western Cape.<sup>234</sup>

However, although this period is presented in many Muslim discourses as a fixed construct, these caliphs only came to be regarded as the model for future generations over time, in interaction with socio-political struggles and theological debates. Towards the end of the second century, as a compromise, all four companion-successors were included in the idealized construct of the *rashidun*.<sup>235</sup>

There are roughly three positions on Muhammad's rule and the relevance of the *rashidun* for later Muslim politics. Abd al-Raziq and Arkoun maintain that Muhammad's mission was not to establish a political order, but that his political leadership was merely contingent to protect the cohesion of the *ummah*. They also hold that the Quran and *Sunnah* are neutral regarding the ideal political order for the *ummah*.<sup>236</sup> Ibn Taimiya also maintains that the era of prophetic succession ended with the *rashidun*, never to be repeated.

However, most classical Sunni Muslim jurists and many present-day thinkers consider Muhammad's political leadership as part of his mission. They maintain that the period of Muhammad and the *rashidun* offers some guidelines for political orders, but not one prescribed form.

Muslim activist utopianism occupies the third position. Mahdist discourses maintain that there will be a miraculous divine irruption on the level of human history, similar to the experience of the prophetic era.<sup>237</sup> A number of Islamist discourses, which consider Islam the solution to all socio-political problems, also pursue a human utopia of a believer community at least equal to the Medinan community.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> Josef van Ess, "Political Ideas in Early Islamic Religious Thought", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* vol. 28 no. 2 (November 2001), pp. 151-164 on pp. 153-156. See also Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 70 and Lindholm, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

<sup>235</sup> For a long time people spoke about three ideal caliphs only, but included different candidates. Because he was not a companion, the fifth ruler after Muhammad, Muawiya, though highly respected, was not included. Van Ess, op. cit., pp. 153-156.

<sup>236</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., pp. 93, 251 and Anouar Abdel-Malek (transl. Michael Pallis), *Contemporary Arab Political Thought* (London: Zed Books, 1983), pp. 41-44.

<sup>237</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 59-61 and Lindholm, op. cit., pp. 88-90. Mahdist discourses, especially prominent among Ismaili Shia, can also be found among some adherents of Sunni Islam, especially in Sunni forms of Sufism. See Christer Hedin, Ingvar Svanberg and David Westerlund, "Introduction", in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 1-35 on p. 12 and Timothy Furnish, "Mahdism in the Sunni Arab World Today," *ISIM Newsletter* no. 4 December 1999, p. 22.

<sup>238</sup> Aziz Al-Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 136-138. Salvatore uses the term solutionist for Islamist. See Salvatore, op. cit., p. 201. Salvatore argues that the term fundamentalist does not distinguish between those Muslims across the ages who have privileged what they perceive as the socioreligious fundamentals of Islam and those in the 20<sup>th</sup> century who have reformed Islam as a total and sometimes totalitarian socio-political ideology and solution. He also prefers the term "solutionist" above the term Islamist, which gives solutionists a hegemonic position vis-à-vis other groups that also pursue Islamic values in the public sphere and can more easily be used by anti-Muslim forces to link the violent excesses of a number of solutionists to the whole Islamic world. This study uses the term Islamist to indicate all political forces that promote Islamic values in the public sphere.

In the first Meccan period, some urban Muslim circles had a tendency towards eschatological views and withdrawal from the world, but the authoritative Muslim discourses of the Medina period have a positive view of politics as such.<sup>239</sup> There are three positions on the basis of political leadership in Muslim thought. Some Sunni and virtually all Shia discourses say that leadership is a religious obligation. In Sunni Islam, most discourses base leadership on necessity, the need to ensure the community's survival and orderly functioning.<sup>240</sup> A few discourses, including some from Mutazilite, Sufi and even revivalist circles, maintain that the *ummah* can exist without rulers if it follows the message of Islam.<sup>241</sup>

There seem to be two main approaches on political community for the whole Muslim *ummah*. For most classical Muslim jurists, the unity of the religious *ummah* implied a unity of political community. Jurists like Al-Mawardi and Al-Ghazzali emphasized the unity of the community, which expressed the unity of Allah, and the caliph as a political symbol of the unity of the community, even if it is a confederal unity.<sup>242</sup> After the end of the Ottoman Turkish caliphate in 1924, the Khilafat movement in India, Hasan Banna and some late 20<sup>th</sup> century marginal Turkish movements still advocated a return of the caliphate. Sabet advocates a transformation in Muslims' communal self-conception that transcends state boundaries, and suggests that Muslim states move to an abodic level based on *asabiyya* and the *Shariah*.<sup>243</sup>

Another approach is close to that of Ibn Taimiya, who rejected the caliph as a model or a symbol for the whole *ummah*. He accepted that the *ummah* had become a collection of different political orders. At most, he was in favour of a system of cooperation between the different Muslim political units, and a transnational moral unity based on the *Shariah*, a position shared by later thinkers in different contexts, such as Rida, El-Affendi and Abu-Sulayman.<sup>244</sup> The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), founded in 1969

<sup>239</sup> This positive view may be related to the success of the religio-political order in Medina and the Arab conquests during the rule of the rightly-guided caliphs. Later, some minority Mutazila and Sufi circles also projected a world-denying attitude. Some of the often oppositional Shia discourses also included more critical perspectives on politics. See Van Ess, op. cit., pp. 162-163 and Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 56-58.

<sup>240</sup> Mehran Tamadonfar, *The Islamic Polity and Political Leadership: Fundamentalism, Sectarianism and Pragmatism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 76-77 and Mozaffari, *Authority in Islam* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1987), pp. 30-31.

<sup>241</sup> Ayubi, op. cit., pp. 22-24. See also Iqbal, op. cit., pp. 38-39 and Van Ess, op. cit., pp. 160-161.

<sup>242</sup> Mozaffari, op. cit., p. 11. This perspective also served as a basis to criticize the irreligious practices of rulers and to create a space for the *ulama* in society in contexts of contesting caliphates, usurpers of caliphal power and an *ummah* fragmented into diverse power zones. Albert Hourani, *Arabic thought in the liberal age 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 5.

<sup>243</sup> Amr Sabet, *The Islamic Paradigm of Nations: Toward a Neo-Classical Approach* (unpublished manuscript, 2002).

<sup>244</sup> Taymiya wrote at a time when the Mongols had overrun the Seljuk Turkish empire and killed the last caliph. For Rida's position, see Enayat, op. cit., pp. 38-39. See also Khan, op. cit., p. 184 and Ayubi, pp. 32-33. See also Abdelwahab El-Effendi, *Who needs an Islamic state?* (London: Grey Seal, 1991), pp. 14, 29-30, 32-40, 96, Abdul-Hamid Abu-Sulayman, *Towards an Islamic Theory of International Relations* (Herndon: The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1993), p. 147 and M. Iqbal, "The Concept of State in Islam," in Mumtaz Ahmed, *State, Politics and Islam* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1986), pp. 36-50 on pp. 44-45.

and currently with 53 member states, is the most prominent example of cooperation between Muslim political units today.<sup>245</sup>

### **The requirements, accession and role of political leaders**

Different Muslim discourses have different requirements regarding the virtue and capability of a ruler. Male gender still remains a requirement in many discourses, descent from Muhammad's lineage less so.<sup>246</sup>

In Sunni Muslim discourses the ruler's accession to power is based on approaches of the rightly-guided caliphs.<sup>247</sup> Abu Bakr's accession to power was based on deliberation in assembly. Umar had been designated by his predecessor, subject to the approval of the community. Uthman had been elected, not by the whole population, but by an electoral council (*shura*) of notable elders, known as the people who "loosen and bind". Ali was brought to power by insurgents and his rule confirmed by a unifying oath of allegiance (*bayah*), which remained incomplete because a group refused to participate in it.<sup>248</sup> Many classical Sunni jurists therefore thought that the *shura* elective approach was the most suitable one.<sup>249</sup>

Two other approaches to accession also date from early Islamic history, and appeared during intra-Arab struggles over power and wealth, as well as rebellions from the diverse non-Arab periphery against the centre.<sup>250</sup> The Kharajis insisted that the most committed Muslim should be the ruler of the *ummah* and should be appointed by elections among all members of the community, not just by consultation of the notables. The Shia believed that God appointed a ruler and that one kin group, the descendants of Muhammad, had spiritual ascendance above all others and an intrinsic right to rule. The designation of successors was therefore accepted, except by the Zaidi Shia, who favoured consultation of all people.<sup>251</sup>

In Sunni discourses, the ways of accession of the rightly-guided caliphs, rooted in particular socio-political contexts, were eventually abstracted into interlinked models of accession. However, in many cases these models had to be reinterpreted to justify the

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<sup>245</sup> The OIC has established certain common institutions, but institutional ineffectiveness, the dominance of member states' interests and a leadership struggle between the two contenders for Gulf regional leadership, Sunni Saudi Arabia and Shiite Iran, have limited its impact. Jeff Haynes, "Transnational religious actors and international politics", *Third World Quarterly* vol. 22 no. 2 (2001), pp. 143-158 on pp. 152-154.

<sup>246</sup> See Abu al-Hasan al-Mawardi (transl. Wafaa Wahba), *The Ordinances of Government* (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 1996), p.4 and Tamaddonfar, op. cit., p. 81-82.

<sup>247</sup> For two different readings of the tribal, urban mercantile and political dynamics involved in the Rashidun's accession to power, see Wilfred Madelung, *The Succession to Muhammad: A Study of the Early Caliphate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) and Rahman, *Islam*, op. cit.

<sup>248</sup> Mawardi, op. cit., pp. 5, 9-10, Ayubi, op. cit., p. 13 and Van Ess, op. cit., pp. 156, 159.

<sup>249</sup> Mozaffari, op.cit., pp. 32-34 adds a revolt and heredity to the forms of appointment of the caliph.

<sup>250</sup> Lindholm, op. cit., pp. 81-88. See also Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought* (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), pp. 4-7.

<sup>251</sup> Ayubi, op. cit., pp. 4, 9 and Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 30-31. See also R. B. Serjeant, "The Religion of the Middle East and North Africa," in *The Middle East and North Africa 1999*, 45th edition (London: Europa Publications, 1999), pp. 26-32.



accession of power by force, bribery or dynastic succession. Eventually, jurists like Al-Ghazzali and Ibn Taimiya, as well as the Wahhabis, actually considered the way in which a ruler came to power secondary and irrelevant.<sup>252</sup>

The socio-political dynamics in many Muslim countries in the Western colonial and postcolonial era made accession by elections an issue again. Especially the *shura* approach has been reinterpreted by some present-day Muslim thinkers, for example Khalid Muhammad Khalid, as a vindication for electoral procedures.<sup>253</sup>

### Obedience to rulers

Sunni discourses acknowledged a duty of obedience to the ruler, but differed on whether and when this duty lapsed. Early Muslim thinkers called for obedience to a ruler as long as he implemented *Shariah*, a position also adhered to by 20<sup>th</sup> century thinkers like Banna and Maududi.

Most classical Sunni discourses tended to call for obedience to any ruler. While both Al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiya, for example, called for critical obedience, both rejected rebellion against unjust rulers.<sup>254</sup> In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this approach has remained very strong, but in certain Arab tribal systems, rulers had limits imposed upon them by their supporters, and dismissals occurred relatively easily.<sup>255</sup>

Differences also exist in Muslim discourses on the relative importance of rulers. In early and classical Muslim discourses, sovereignty was not located in the ruler or the *ummah*, but in God's will, as expressed in the *Shariah*.<sup>256</sup> The ruler was tasked with spiritual leadership too, but eventually an autonomous political sphere developed and was accepted by the *ulama*.

Most theologians and scribes in early and classical Islam agreed that the common people are like a flock that needed the ruler as an organizing shepherd.<sup>257</sup> The main value of the political order was establishing order in such a way that the Muslim *ummah*, the central political unit, could execute its religious duty to practice and propagate the divine message.

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<sup>252</sup> Azmeh, *Islams and Modernities*, op. cit., p. 146.

<sup>253</sup> Ismail, in Brynen et al, op. cit., pp. 96-97 and Fazlur Rahman, "Shura and the Role of the Ummah", in Mumtaz Ahmed (ed.), *State, Politics and Islam* (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1986), pp. 87-96 on p. 92.

<sup>254</sup> The experience of civil wars and Muslim rebellions, usurper rulers who were trying to keep armed factions and diverse power zones together, the authoritarian politics, culture and economics of the conquered Persian and Byzantine territories, and the victory of the non-Muslim and militarized Mongol political orders heavily influenced discourses on this issue. Lindholm, op. cit., pp. 101-104, Omaruddin Khan, op. cit., pp. 122, 167 and 182 and Ayubi, op. cit., p. 16.

<sup>255</sup> Ouis, *Power, Person, and Place*, op. cit., p. 327.

<sup>256</sup> Esposito, *Islam and Politics*, op. cit., pp. 139-140. For an attempted reconciliation of God and the people as sources of sovereignty, see Raja Bahlul, "People vs God: the logic of 'divine sovereignty' in Islamic democratic discourse," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* vol. 11 no. 3 (October 2000), pp. 287-298.

<sup>257</sup> Van Ess, op. cit., p. 160. See also Mawardi, op. cit., p. 3 and Ibn Taimiya (transl. Muhtar Holland), *Public Duties in Islam: The Institution of the Hisba* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1983), p. 115.

## Authority and legitimacy

Authority is linked to a relation of trust between people, and is an effect of a perceived or institutionally ascribed asymmetry between the speaker and the audience. It is characterized by unquestioning recognition by those who are asked to obey without the need for persuasion or coercion.<sup>258</sup>

Persuasion refers to processes of winning others over through reasoned elaboration. In contrast, coercion involves the processes of bending the will of others through threats or acts of violence. Both persuasion and coercion exist as potentialities implicit within authority. However, persuasion and coercion are usually only actualised when those who claim authority sense that they do not have the trust and respect of those over whom they seek to exercise it, and for that period the relation of trust and acceptance is suspended.<sup>259</sup>

The authority relation needs a common ground between an authority figure and a follower and reasons, from the follower's perspective, that already compel the follower to obey. Authority relations belong to a wider discourse of practices and perspectives that provide meaning to relations in a community. The perceived legitimacy of an authority relation prevents the relation from breaking down and a breakdown in legitimacy will lead to a breakdown in authority.<sup>260</sup>

Legitimacy can be defined as the capacity of a social order to generate the belief that the existing institutions are the most appropriate ones for the society.<sup>261</sup> However, legitimacy may have different meanings among different groups and there are various possible sources of legitimacy in different contexts.

In early Islam, legitimacy derived from prophetic charisma, the principles of consultation and a contractual allegiance between the ruler and the ruled. The Umayyads legitimised their rule by reference to a predetermined plan of God, and the Abbasids by reference to the ruler as a political symbol of the group unity. When such unity disappeared, the *Shariah* became a source of ideological unity and legitimacy. The regional sultanid rulers enjoyed legitimacy as long as they could provide defence against the foreign invaders.<sup>262</sup>

Legitimacy is often based on a combination of factors, but one factor may predominate. In some cases a thorough implementation of religious prescriptions is promoted by the rulers and used as the basis for legitimacy, as in Iran and Saudi Arabia today.<sup>263</sup> In some states, like Turkey, Pakistan and Indonesia, the political and religious spheres are

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<sup>258</sup> Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Joranson, 1969), p. 215.

<sup>259</sup> Bruce Lincoln, *Authority: Construction and Corrosion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 5-7.

<sup>260</sup> See Eduardo Zambrano, "Social theories of authority", essay prepared for the *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, March 29, 2000.

<sup>261</sup> See among others S. M. Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday 1960), p. 77.

<sup>262</sup> Ayubi, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

<sup>263</sup> Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

separated to a large degree. Kinship and traditional values<sup>264</sup> remain a basis for legitimacy in Jordan and Morocco.

The personal charisma of the leader and patronage are other bases of legitimacy, for example in the United Arab Emirates. The effectiveness of the ruler in dealing with the outside world and securing the interests of the society are used in the legitimising discourses of rulers in Iraq and Syria, while ideology, such as socialism and nationalism, legitimised Nasserist Egypt.<sup>265</sup> However, in predominantly Muslim states, rulers mostly need to be seen as 'good Muslims' by a significant section of the population, as far as their personal and their political conduct is concerned.<sup>266</sup>

As Connolly notes, to participate in a political order means sharing many pre-judgements stabilized in the common language and institutional practices.<sup>267</sup> An individual may never exhaust all his or her roles. However, "one's sense of dignity, of self-identity, is intimately linked to one's ability to endorse the way of life one actually lives."<sup>268</sup> Both personal identity and group identity are linked to legitimacy.

According to Eckstein's theory of congruence, a stable democracy requires a congruence or resemblance between government authority and various other authority patterns of society.<sup>269</sup> There can be a spectrum of different relationships between collective identity groups and the corporate identity of a state, and this can have an impact on state legitimacy and durability.<sup>270</sup>

Collective identity groups can also affect the authority and capacity of a state, for example when members of a group refuse to pay taxes or to cooperate with the police, or become willing to render services to the state beyond the normal call of civic duty. On the macro-level, systemic tensions and contradictions can create the incentive for collective action, but only the midlevel processes of mobilization, organization, ideology and leadership can actualise such action, depending on the political opportunities in the environment.

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<sup>264</sup> Gerd Nonneman, *Governance, Human Rights, and the Case for Political Adaptation in the Gulf: Issues in the EU-GCC Political Dialogue*, European University Institute, Policy Paper 01/3, Robert Schumann Center for Advanced Studies, p. 15.

<sup>265</sup> James Bill and Carl Leiden, *Middle East Politics* (Canada, Little Brown and Co. 1984), p. 48.

<sup>266</sup> In Gulf Arab countries, including the symbolically important Saudi Arabia, such criticism generally is less of an issue when performance, with reference to the four factors of charisma, tradition, patronage and dealing with the outside world, is satisfactory. If performance is satisfactory, the transgression has to be very serious for it to become a factor. However, in these countries, the worse the performance on the other four factors, the more importance this factor will acquire. Nonneman, *Governance*, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>267</sup> William Connolly, "Legitimacy", in William Connolly (ed.), *Legitimacy and the State* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), pp. 222-249 on pp. 224-225.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid., p. 225.

<sup>269</sup> Harry Eckstein, *Congruence Theory Explained* at <http://hypatia.ss.uci.edu/democ/papers/harry2.htm>

<sup>270</sup> Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991), p. 97.

## Midlevel processes in collective action

Social movements consist of shifting clusters of networks and activist individuals grounded in and forming legitimising discourses and collective identities in interaction with opponents, allies and the contingent political context.<sup>271</sup> Mobilization is a process of assembling and organizing resources to pursue a shared objective.<sup>272</sup> It depends on a network of pre-existing collective ties, and a segmented society that allows more immediate identification of the adversary and group polarization.<sup>273</sup>

Mobilization can keep collective action alive in adverse environments, through various means, for example by means of an organization, identity management and collective learning processes.<sup>274</sup> Tilly describes the set of means available as a repertoire of collective action, involving learning and limits, but allowing for variation and change from one event to the next.<sup>275</sup> They can also create unexpected networks and possibilities.<sup>276</sup>

Differences of participation are related to conditions that some individuals experience as subjectively intolerable, individuals' recognition of others like themselves and certain shared experiences acquired in similar situations.<sup>277</sup> New incentives and political opportunities may also enhance participation.

Symbolic production and cultivated organizational resources are both interwoven with a spectrum of relations between the supporters, activists and leadership of an organization. An organization can become both a means of political action and an alternative society.<sup>278</sup> Material resources can include group numbers as a proportion of the total population within a territorial state, the geographical dispersion or concentration of the group and the wealth that can be mobilized. Other resources are the relative cohesion of the group and the ability to gain support from outside the state.<sup>279</sup>

Various groups form the basis of a movement. An organization establishes a structure, shared objectives for such groups and material, solidarity or value realization incentives designed to obtain the consensus of members and the division of labour.<sup>280</sup> A large part of resources is used to create and maintain a specific identity, rather than pursuing external objectives.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> Whittier, op. cit., pp. 289-290.

<sup>272</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 289.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., p. 291.

<sup>274</sup> Eder, op. cit., p. 25.

<sup>275</sup> Charles Tilly, "Social movements and National Politics," in Charles Bright and Susan Harding (eds.), *Statemaking and Social Movements: Essays in History and Theory* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984), pp. 297-317 on pp. 307-308.

<sup>276</sup> Routledge, op. cit., p. 512.

<sup>277</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 300.

<sup>278</sup> Roy, op. cit., p. 47.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>280</sup> Melucci, op. cit., pp. 315-316.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., p. 329.

The power system in the organization includes a structure of power distribution, participatory or authoritarian processes to handle demands and form decisions, and the mechanisms for leadership succession.<sup>282</sup> However, involvement in a movement fluctuates, coalitions emerge and dissolve, and would-be leaders compete. Tilly therefore says that broader social movements should be viewed not in terms of group models, but as sustained interactions between changing sets of challengers and authorities.<sup>283</sup> Routledge also indicates that the untamed and unexpected moments of energy and excitement, the mood and tone experienced by those affirming themselves against opponents, are an essential force in political struggle.<sup>284</sup>

Leadership is based on the type of relations and exchange that link actors together.<sup>285</sup> Activists are those members who contribute a big share of their energies to the organization, while sympathizers are not members, but support some of the organization's goals.<sup>286</sup>

Leaders need to define, prioritise and adapt objectives. They must also maintain the structure of the movement, the circulation of information and cohesion through control of the channels of communication. This role may be fulfilled through a hierarchical or a decentralized system. The Ibadis, who had to operate as an opposition movement, prescribed that the leader's authority should be dispersed whenever work in secret required it. The leader also had to cultivate others who could act as leaders.<sup>287</sup>

Leaders seek to preserve consensus over objectives, furnish incentives of solidarity, project an image of the group with which members can identify and from which they extract affective gratification, and attract growing investments from members.<sup>288</sup> Scanning and interpreting the environment for threats and opportunities also form an important part of the value added by leaders.<sup>289</sup>

Collective actors use a set of symbolic frameworks or ideology to represent their actions to themselves and to others within a system of social relationships. Ideology is ambivalent in three respects. It expresses the actual meaning and goals of collective action, but also covers the diverse orientations and tensions of different members of the organization that produced it. It reproduces social relationships, but simultaneously hides them by framing collective action in general values. Finally, it operates in a relational field constructed by conflictual orientations, but tries to negate any social identity of the opponent.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Ibid., p. 316.

<sup>283</sup> Tilly, "Social Movements", op. cit., p. 315.

<sup>284</sup> Paul Routledge, "Critical geopolitics and terrains of resistance", *Political Geography* vol. 15 no. 6/7 (1996), pp. 509-531 on pp. 522-523.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid., p. 333.

<sup>286</sup> Esman, op. cit., pp. 32-34.

<sup>287</sup> Isam Al-Rawas, *Oman in early Islamic History* (Reading: Ithaca, 2000), p. 99.

<sup>288</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 341, Esman, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>289</sup> See Aldon Morris and Suzanne Staggenborg, "Leadership in Social Movements", November 2002 at <http://www.cas.northwestern.edu/sociology/faculty/files/leadershipessay.pdf>.

<sup>290</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p.349.

As the movement grows, two essential elements of ideology are called into play. Ideology fulfils a function of organizational integration and is a resource that can be used to reduce the costs and maximize the benefits of action and support in a particular environment.<sup>291</sup>

The status of the organization, the roles of social elites and social access to them, social control and support systems, and the historical roles, present capacities and the responses of the state are part of the political opportunity structure in an environment. The intensity of mobilization waves, or the lack thereof, often has to do with the perspectives on and the conditions of the contingent political opportunity structure.<sup>292</sup>

### **The political system**

The political system is an analytical category only. It represents the level of the social structure where normative decisions are made. These decisions cover three areas, namely the norms that govern exchanges among different groups or interests in a society, the framework that guides the decision-making process of the political system, and the dynamics of the productive system. Each organization creates a level at which confrontation, negotiation and decisions occur.<sup>293</sup>

In the political systems of many industrialized countries there are an increasing number of partial and participative decision-making structures. In addition, however, there is also a consolidation of central technocratic apparatuses, which exert increasing influence over the decisions concerning societal ends and meanings, and effectively remove them outside the control of those affected.<sup>294</sup> In other political systems, many in the Muslim world and Africa in general, central state apparatuses are often permeated and transformed by informal networks, the real structures of decision-making.<sup>295</sup>

The dominant social relations constrain the scope of decision-making by establishing the areas of decidability as well as the areas which remain non-negotiable. They also ensure an advantage by allocating the opportunities for access to and utilization of the system.<sup>296</sup> Within the limits set by dominant social relations, a political system's ability to deal with a demand depends upon its available resources.<sup>297</sup> Demands are selected and the execution of a decision requires the mobilization of the state apparatus or the informal networks of power, as well as sufficient political consensus.<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>291</sup> Ibid., p. 352.

<sup>292</sup> Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. 36-59, Eder, op. cit., p. 30 and Melucci, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., pp. 229-230.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>295</sup> Chabal and Deloz, op. cit.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., p. 231-232. See also Chabal and Deloz, op. cit.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid., p. 236.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid., p. 241.

Execution changes the conditions for the making of future decisions, and the success of future responses may depend on the limited feedback received by an actor. During all these overlapping and sometimes non-linear phases, contestation, exchanges and negotiations between unequal forces often come into play. Collective action is fed by social demands that the political system excludes, does not understand or addresses only partially.<sup>299</sup>

### **The state**

Melucci characterizes the state as a composite historical and territorial unit, in which three analytical components co-exist. Firstly, the state is an historical agent unifying the various modes of production of a society, diverse interest and identity groups, and different spaces. Secondly, the state is the political agent of an institutional decision-making system, narrower than the analytical concept of the political system. Thirdly, the state is a functional agent of organizational bureaucratic apparatuses. Its functionality is closely interwoven with dominant relations.

The state is only one actor in wider circuits of power and not a monolithic one. It is mostly a complex nexus of formations and incoherences, formed by previous contests and being reformed by new tensions, contests and attempts at internal autonomization, for example by its security forces. Internal coherence may only be achieved through the pursuit of unifying projects.<sup>300</sup>

Historically there have been different political configurations in Muslim countries.<sup>301</sup> However, in virtually all of these countries small shifting clusters of individuals and kinship structures with informal personalised styles tend to dominate politics, and have done so throughout Muslim history.<sup>302</sup> These dynamics have affected the limits of classical and modern Muslim political thought in the region.

Likewise, in many postcolonial and sometimes also Muslim-dominated states in sub-Saharan Africa, informal networks of patronage and accumulation, violence, kinship groups and indigenous worldviews play an important and often dominant role in the contests for wealth and power.<sup>303</sup> These factors may transform the dynamics of a particular state.

Lodge argues that Southern African states differ since they have stronger or longer traditions of legitimation, well-developed capitalist class structures, greater state autonomy from social forces, as well as a better ability to extract resources and provide

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<sup>299</sup> Ibid., pp. 241, 287.

<sup>300</sup> Anna Yeatman, *Postmodern Revisionings of the Political* (London: Routledge 1994), pp. 108-113.

<sup>301</sup> Arkoun, *Rethinking Islam*, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>302</sup> See, for example, James A. Bill and Robert Springborg, *Politics in the Middle East* (Glenview: Scott, Foresman/Little, Brown, 1990), p. 88.

<sup>303</sup> See Peter Geschiere, *The Modernity of Witchcraft: politics and the occult in postcolonial Africa* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), pp. 198-214, Chabal and Daloz, op. cit. (Oxford: James Currey 1999), pp. 144-162, William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), pp. 217-227.

for needs. Bureaucratic rationality is also more widespread, as indicated by a relative absence of corruption, an institutional corporate culture and high levels of professionalism and competence among civil servants.<sup>304</sup> However, the increasingly autocratic and nepotist rule of president Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe since the late 1990s indicate that in at least some Southern African states the difference may not be substantive, but only one of degree.<sup>305</sup>

Connolly says that late modernity include numerous networks of discordant interdependencies and intensified interactions.<sup>306</sup> These and other conditions give rise to a pluralization of energies and spaces of action that exceed the boundaries of territorial democratic statehood.<sup>307</sup> The state often does not fully contain the everyday experiences of politics, identities, loyalties or political community.<sup>308</sup> This situation naturally provides challenges for democracies.

## Democracy

There are a number of democratic theories. Robert Dahl's concept of polyarchy is used here as a basic point of departure. It measures the amount of regular and open competition in political systems, also indicated by smaller parties' share of the parliamentary vote, and the extent to which voter turnouts indicate different forms of participation in political decision-making by the population of a political unit. Democracy, according to his model, also implies civil liberties that make political contestation and participation possible and meaningful.<sup>309</sup>

Collier and Levitsky have a similar focus on a "procedural minimum" to define democracy. They also suggest the use of other terms than democracy, and the differentiation between regime and state, to achieve a more precise analysis of diverse settings without having to stretch the concept of a democracy too far.<sup>310</sup> Vanhanen emphasizes competitiveness in his definition of democracy, measuring it with reference to the percentage of votes won by the largest party and the percentage of the total population which actually voted.<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Tom Lodge, "The Southern African Post-Colonial state," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* vol. 36 no. 1 (March 1998), pp. 20-47 on pp. 22, 42-43.

<sup>305</sup> See Stephen Chan, *Robert Mugabe: A Life of Power and Violence* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), Martin Meredith, *Power, Plunder, and the Struggle for Zimbabwe* (New York: Public Affairs, 2007) and Judith Garfield Todd, *Through the Darkness: A Life in Zimbabwe* (Cape Town: Struik Publishers, 2007).

<sup>306</sup> Connolly, "Democracy and Territoriality", op. cit., pp. 49-75 on pp. 69-70.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

<sup>308</sup> Peter Mandaville, "Territory and Translocality: Discrepant Idioms of Political Identity," International Studies Association 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention, Los Angeles, California, March 14-18, 2000, p. 7.

<sup>309</sup> Dirk Berg-Schlosser, "The Quality of Democracies in Europe as measured by current indicators of democratization and good governance", paper presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Conference of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) in Marburg, September 18-21, 2003, p. 4.

<sup>310</sup> David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Research Note: Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research", *World Politics* volume 49 number 3 (April 1997), pp. 430-451 on p. 434.

<sup>311</sup> See Tatu Vanhanen, *Prospects of Democracy: A Study of 172 Countries* (London: Routledge, 1997).



There are broadly three groups among Muslims on the issue of democracy. Some Muslim modernists promote the emulation of successful Western ideas and practices without compromising the *Shariah* for the sake of modernization.

A second group rejects democracy as alien and un-Islamic. Islam, according to Sayyid and Muhammad Qutb, is a divinely-ordained system in which sovereignty belongs to God, whereas democracy is an imperfect man-made system. Maududi sees man's rule over man as the basis of ignoble government. Furthermore, democracy is connected to Western imperialism and moral decay. In addition, especially in the Arab countries, it is implemented in a corrupt way.<sup>312</sup>

A third group maintains that the West does not have a monopoly on determining what a democracy is, and that Muslims have the right to develop their own systems and approaches.<sup>313</sup> Qaradawi, like Khalid Muhammad Khalid, argues that *shura* is similar to democratic-type participation in the management of state and society. He also is in favour of a multiparty system, as long as it is in the interest of the *ummah* and compatible with religious and moral values.<sup>314</sup>

### **Citizenship and rights**

Citizenship refers to legal membership of a political community. However, the concept emerged from autonomous Western nation-states and it remains a contested concept, affected by the historically constructed configuration of a particular political order.

In classical Muslim discourses, political community was based on religion and according to Mansoor, the linked concept of nation-states and citizenship did not exist.<sup>315</sup> Other Muslim thinkers disagree, and maintain that being a Muslim was a sufficient and necessary condition for citizenship.<sup>316</sup> In Iran, Turkey and much of the Arab world, citizenship as membership of a political community and citizen politics are often superseded by membership of ethnoreligious groups and the politics of communities and patronage.<sup>317</sup>

Membership of the political community, entitlement to citizenship, can be based on a spectrum of possibilities between the poles of descentance, or birth and residence in the

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<sup>312</sup> Najib Ghadbian, *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in the Arab World* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), pp. 73-74.

<sup>313</sup> Davis, *Between Jihad and Salaam*, op. cit., pp. 309, 311.

<sup>314</sup> Salwa Ismail, "Democracy in Contemporary Arab Intellectual Discourse" in Rex Brynen, Bahgat Korany and Paul Noble (eds.), *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), pp. 93-111 on pp. 96-97. See also Ghadbian, op. cit., pp. 78-80 and Parvez Mansoor, *State and Human Rights: A Guide for the Perplexed Muslim*, Paper delivered at the Human Rights Conference, Diyarbakir, Turkey, September 1997 at <http://www.algonet.se>.

<sup>315</sup> Mansoor, *State and Human Rights*, op. cit.

<sup>316</sup> El-Affendi, *Muslim or Citizen*, op. cit. See Bassam Tibi, "Religious Fundamentalism, Ethnicity and the Nation-State in the Middle East," in T.K. Oommen (ed.) *Citizenship and National Identity: From Colonialism to Globalism* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), pp. 199-225 on pp. 220-222.

<sup>317</sup> Sami Zubaida, "Islam and the Politics of Community and Citizenship," *Middle East Report* no. 221 (Winter 2001), pp. 20-27

territory. Some countries, like Malaysia, have full citizenship for members of the dominant ethnic community and constrained membership for others.<sup>318</sup>

The difference between descentance-based and civic citizenship is in many cases not clearly delineated. In states like Morocco and Tunisia, a combination of these two forms occurs.<sup>319</sup> In fact, even states with explicit civic citizenship in the West and the Muslim world are based on ethno-cultural cores and historically had dominant discourses with different combinations of civic and ethno-cultural elements.<sup>320</sup> While even descentance-based forms of citizenship in the West revolve around the individual citizen, the family is considered the basic unit of society and citizenry in a country like Saudi Arabia.<sup>321</sup>

Civic citizenship, citizenship based on birth and residence in the territory, as in South Africa since 1994, does not guarantee equality of status, treatment or opportunity. Governments may tolerate informal, but nevertheless effective patterns of exclusion and discrimination based on age, gender, ethnicity and religion practiced by state agencies or groups in society. Examples of such victim groups include the Berbers in Algeria, Kurds in Turkey and Iraq, southerners in Sudan and Nigeria, and Chinese in Indonesia.<sup>322</sup>

New forms and sites of citizenship and claims have emerged since 1945. As Soysal points out, national citizenship rights have increasingly been recast as human rights, legitimated at the transnational level. In addition, a decoupling of citizen rights and national identity has occurred.<sup>323</sup> Paradoxically, the same international organizations that celebrate inclusionary human rights, have redefined collective exclusionary cultural identities as a category of human rights.<sup>324</sup>

Even democracy, the participation of many people in decisionmaking, may sometimes be opposed to diversity, the principle of unassimilated difference. As Melucci argues, some structures and processes to organize democratic participation may threaten different groups with assimilation, neutralization, marginalisation or suppression.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> Esman, op. cit., p. 250. In individual cases in an ethnic polity like the UAE or Bahrain, citizenship may also be awarded by a ruler to someone based on services rendered or other special circumstances. See for example Shereen Bushehri, "Naturalised Bahrainis return home", *Gulf News*, 4 November 2002, p. 10.

<sup>319</sup> Mounira M. Charrad, "Becoming a Citizen: Lineage versus Individual in Tunisia and Morocco" in Suad Joseph (ed.) *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000), pp. 70-87 on p. 72.

<sup>320</sup> Jaroslav Krejci and Vitezslav Velimsky, "Ethnic and political nations in Europe," in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (eds), *Ethnicity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 212-217. See also Eric Kaufmann, "American exceptionalism reconsidered: Anglo-Saxon ethnogenesis in the 'Universal' Nation," *Journal of American Studies* vol. 33 part 3 (1999), pp. 437-458.

<sup>321</sup> Soraya Altorki, "The Concept and Practice of Citizenship in Saudi Arabia," in Joseph, *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East*, op. cit., pp. 215-236 on pp. 219-220.

<sup>322</sup> Esman, op. cit., p. 251. See also Monshipouri, op. cit., pp. 219, 224 and 229, and Filomeno Aguilav, "Citizenship, Inheritance, and the Indigenizing of 'Orang Chinese' in Indonesia," *Positions* vol. 9 no. 3 (Winter 2001), pp. 501-533.

<sup>323</sup> Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal, "Citizenship and identity: living in diasporas in post-war Europe?" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol. 23 no.1 (January 2000), pp. 1-15 on p. 6.

<sup>324</sup> Soysal, op. cit., pp. 5-7.

<sup>325</sup> Smith, op. cit., p. 186 and Connolly, "Legitimacy", p. 242.

There is an increasing tendency for Muslim minorities in Europe to advance particularist identities and demands that are located in and legitimated by the universalist and now expanded discourse of human rights. This does not simply involve the extension of citizenship rights to previously excluded groups, but redefines the political system itself to accommodate diversity and institute new inter-group relationships. However, the nation-state continues to be the most important framework for the identities, organizations and claims of minorities, and their demands are mainly addressed to the national authorities.<sup>326</sup> The human rights discourse has also not been used with much success by Muslim ethnic, regional or doctrinal minorities in states like Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan or Algeria.

Charles Taylor maintains that the values people live by are plural, uncombinable and irreducible to a single moral metric. However, recognition is a human universal, and by recognizing the worth of others through dialogue and receiving their affirmation of our own, we come to actualise ourselves as fully formed identity-bearing human beings, with a sense of self-worth grounded in a moral identity.<sup>327</sup> William Connolly is in favour of a politics of agonistic respect, “in which one of the ways of belonging together involves strife and in which one of the democratising ingredients in strife is the cultivation of care for the ways opponents respond to mysteries of existence.”<sup>328</sup>

Melucci argues that democracy in complex societies must also mean to allow the creation of social conditions which lend themselves to recognition and autonomy. Democracy means freedom to belong or freedom to construct social spaces of recognition. Nevertheless, there is a tension between direct, immediate belonging and indirect delayed representation. A definition of democracy in a complex society must include two further freedoms: the freedom not to belong, as the right to withdraw from one’s constituted identity in order to create a new one, and the freedom not to be represented, as the right to reject or modify the given conditions of representation.<sup>329</sup>

This approach can be linked to Althusius’s approach that politics is a process of community building that essentially is about social coordination of overlapping smaller consociations. The smaller consociations have residual power, the goal of self-sufficiency and the right of secession, but are held together by pacts in a system aimed at consensus-building, where the state is not the central focus. This is linked to the concept of subsidiarity, that policies in a compound political system with several layers of decision-

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<sup>326</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 152 and Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham, "Challenging the Liberal Nation-state? Postnationalism, Multiculturalism, and the Collective Claims Making of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities in Britain and Germany," *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 105 no. 3 (November 1999), pp. 652-696 on pp. 659, 688-689.

<sup>327</sup> Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), chapter 2. See also Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in A. Gutman (ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining ‘The Politics of Recognition’* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 25-73.

<sup>328</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, op.cit., p. 33.

<sup>329</sup> Melucci, op. cit., pp. 219-220.

making should be made at the lowest possible level, and that the higher level should only legislate where there is unanimous agreement that uniform regulation is necessary.<sup>330</sup>

To some extent this is reflected in Lijphart's consociational democracy, where the political leaders who effectively speak for the political group they represent cooperate to counteract centrifugal tendencies in a system of segmental autonomy, proportional representation, grand coalitions and strong vetoing powers.<sup>331</sup> This could constitute one form of a politics of presence with a differentiated citizenship and a heterogeneous public that recognize and represent the differences and diverse perspectives of others.<sup>332</sup>

A confederal or federal system that combines self-rule and shared rule, consociational democracy, or a system in which territorial and electoral reform provides for cross-cutting bases of identity are different ways of avoiding both struggles for secession or violent protest by Muslim minorities and what Horowitz calls an exclusive majoritarian rule, where the outcome is fore-ordained by group demographics.<sup>333</sup> However, the dynamics of a particular state may leave minorities a much more restricted freedom to construct social spaces of recognition and pursue collective action, representation and decentralized political units.

### **Muslim minorities in Muslim countries**

After the Arab conquest of the Persian empire and parts of the Byzantine empire, Islamic jurisprudence eventually gave a religious interpretation of it, distinguishing between the *Dar al-Islam* (the abode of Islam), which include the lands under Muslim rule and the *Dar al-Harb* (variously translated as hostile territory or the abode of war), which potentially includes everybody else. Later, as contact and interaction grew with those non-Muslim powers that could not be conquered, the concept of *Dar al-Sulh* or *Dar al-uaahadah* (non-Muslim friendly territory with whom there is a treaty) was introduced.<sup>334</sup> However, all these concepts also form part of the discursive contests among Muslims today.

According to some scholars, like Shaykh Faysal Mawlawi, the principle that should regulate the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims is not strife, but preaching (*dawa*). If the criterion for the abode of Islam would be a complete observance of

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<sup>330</sup> Thomas Hueglin, "Federalism, Subsidiarity and the European Tradition", at <http://www.ecsanet.org/conferences/ecsaworld2/Hueglin.htm>. See also Robert A. Dahl and Edward R. Tufte, *Size and Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), pp. 129-135 and the discussion in Du Toit, op. cit., pp. 22-25.

<sup>331</sup> Arend Lijphart, "The Evolution of Consociational Theory and Consociational Practices, 1905-2000", *Acta Politica* no. 37 (2002), pp. 11-22. See also Robert A. Dahl and Edward R. Tufte, *Size and Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973), pp. 129-135 and the discussion in Du Toit, op. cit., pp. 22-25.

<sup>332</sup> Chantal Mouffe, *The Return of the Political* (London: Verso, 1993), pp. 86-87. See also Anne Phillips, *Democracy and Difference* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995) and David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

<sup>333</sup> Donald L. Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa? Constitution Engineering in a Divided Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 96-98.

<sup>334</sup> El-Affendi, *Who Needs*, op. cit., p. 68 and Armstrong, op. cit., p. 26.

religious prescriptions, then most of the Muslim countries would not form part of it. He distinguishes between an abode of Islam and an abode of preaching. Abd al-Aziz ibn al-Siddiq applies the Shafi doctrine that the abode of Islam exists wherever a Muslim is able to practice the major religious observances, and thus Europe and the USA also qualify.<sup>335</sup>

The Islamic discourses on Muslim minorities contain several competing approaches, including migration or *jihad* to resist oppression or turn the territory into an Islamic one, and accommodation to the status of a minority out of necessity.<sup>336</sup> These discourses also contain several potentially competing considerations, including the command to escape oppression, uphold Islamic law, serve the public and private interest of Muslims, and observe explicit and implicit promises made to a non-Muslim state. It is estimated that Muslim minorities now constitute between a quarter and a third of the total Muslim population.<sup>337</sup>

There are different perspectives on the status of non-Muslims in Muslim political orders. While there have been cases of suppression, the classical Islamic and main current solutionist approach has been the granting of the contract of *dhimma* (protection) and freedom of worship to Christians and Jews in exchange for special taxes, but not to polytheists. In Saudi Arabia and the UAE *dhimmis* cannot obtain citizenship, whereas the Tunisian solutionist Ghannouchi, like Maududi, favours an approach of two forms of citizenship in nation-states.<sup>338</sup>

Some Muslim thinkers that favour a new approach to minorities base their arguments on principle. Anwar Ibrahim, for example, argues that different religious communities should be accommodated in a universal citizenship based on the values of socio-economic justice and equality.<sup>339</sup> Others argue that the abolition of the caliphate, which dealt with non-Muslims as a conquered people, removed one party to the contract. Modern Muslim states have come into existence as a result of struggles in which non-Muslims participated too, and if an Islamic state is re-established, non-Muslims resident in its territory should be full citizens with equal rights.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> Wasif Shahid and Sjoerd van Koningsveld, "Loyalty to a non-Muslim Government: An analysis of Islamic Normative Discussions and of the Views of some Contemporary Islamicists," in Shahid and Koningsveld, op. cit., pp. 84-114 on pp. 97-98.

<sup>336</sup> M. Ali Kettam, *Muslim Minorities in the World Today* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986), pp. 3, 259 and Bernhard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam*, op. cit., pp. 105-107.

<sup>337</sup> Ahmed, *Postmodernism and Islam*, pp. 141-142 and Khaled Abou El Fadl, "Striking a Balance: Islamic Legal Discourse on Muslim Minorities" in Yvonne Haddad and John Esposito, *Muslims on the Americanization Path?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 47-63 on pp. 49, 61-62.

<sup>338</sup> Esposito and Voll, op. cit., p. 115. See also Hamdi, op. cit., p. 116, Ishtiaq Ahmed, "South Asia" in Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 212-252 on pp. 229, Uriah Furman, "Minorities in Contemporary Islamist Discourse," *Middle Eastern Studies* vol. 36 no. 4 (October 2000), pp. 1-20 and Sayed Khatab, "Citizenship Rights of Non-Muslims in the Islamic State of *Hakamiyya* Espoused by Sayyid Qutb," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* vol. 13 no. 2 (April 2002), pp. 163-188.

<sup>339</sup> Esposito and Voll, *Makers*, op. cit., p. 196.

<sup>340</sup> Abdelwahab El-Affendi, "Muslim or Citizen?," *CSD Bulletin* vol. 8 no. 1 (Winter 2000-2001) and El-Affendi, *Who Needs*, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

Other thinkers' arguments are based on present circumstances or possible consequences. Fahmi Huweidi maintains that traditional Islamic concepts have been overtaken by political events and the development of the concept of equal citizenship, while Fathi Osman argues that it would be difficult for Muslims to defend Muslim minorities against discrimination if they themselves practiced it.<sup>341</sup>

Muslim minorities that adhere to an interpretation of Islam that differs from that of the majority have variously experienced policies of co-optation, assimilation or suppression.<sup>342</sup> There are also examples of recognition. In Turkey, the Refah party proposes a system whereby each community is governed by its own belief system, with the state guaranteeing the autonomy of each community.<sup>343</sup> Group representation of minorities occurs in the parliaments of Pakistan and Iran.<sup>344</sup> Saad Eddin Ebrahim argues for a solution based on a triangle of federalism: democracy, political and cultural autonomy, and a civil society that cuts across religious and ethnic loyalties. In a few cases, like Syria, Iraq and Bahrein, doctrinal minorities rule their countries.

### **Strategies of Muslim minorities in non-Muslim countries**

Muslim minorities in countries where most of the people are non-Muslim also find themselves in a wide spectrum of situations. Collective action to affect the political system can take various forms. Acceptance of the political system, mobility in the system from more limiting to less limiting or more private spheres, exit from the system, using human rights discourses to promote particularist claims, the expression of dissatisfaction or the drive for change within the limits of the system have all been responses by Muslims in countries where they represent minorities.<sup>345</sup>

Identity issues often cannot be entirely translated into the language of the political system and may need to be raised at the level of the productive system - as a more general question of how difference is dealt with in society.<sup>346</sup> However, dominant groups in societies tend to deny the existence of conflicts which involve the productive system, and a minority may have a limited capacity to overcome such a denial.<sup>347</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> El-Affendi, *Muslim or Citizen*, op. cit.

<sup>342</sup> See Ahmed, *Islam and Postmodernism*, pp. 45, Moshe Ma'oz, *Middle Eastern Minorities: Between Integration and Conflict*, Policy Papers no. 50, Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1999, and Gabriel Ben-Dor and Ofra Bengio, "The State and Minorities Toward the Twenty-first Century: An Overview" in Ofra Bengio and Gabriel Ben-Dor (eds), *Minorities and the State in the Arab world* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), pp. 191-205 on pp. 202-203.

<sup>343</sup> Haldun Gülap, "Islamism and Kurdish Nationalism: Rival Adversaries of Kemalism in Turkey," in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the question of Minorities* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), pp. 93-109 on pp. 103-104.

<sup>344</sup> Bielefeldt, op. cit., p. 598.

<sup>345</sup> Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 4. See also Wahid Phares, "Are Christian Enclaves the Solution?", *Middle East Quarterly* vol. 8 no. 1 (Winter 2001), pp. 61-70.

<sup>346</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 188.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

Many societies are increasingly differentiated and their various systems thus more autonomous. Therefore, a movement as a pure medium may be able to reveal that there is a conflict concerning some basic orientations of society. In such a case, it may encounter three options: it can either turn to a purely symbolic counterculture or marginal violence, or attempt to transform itself into political institutions with a new language and capacity to structure the political system.<sup>348</sup>

In the latter case, movements have sometimes opted to struggle for alternative political systems inside or outside the confines of the dominant system. The institution of a Muslim community council in France in 2002, the demand of the Moplah community of Kerala in 1947 for the establishment of a Moplastan within the Indian Union, which eventually was granted in the form of a Moplah-dominated district of Mallapuram in 1969, the building of an implicitly challenging religious community inside an avowedly Turkish secular state, and the secession of Pakistan are examples.<sup>349</sup>

However, such a top-down approach is not the only one. Hasan Banna insisted that his main aim was to create the Muslim individual, which would create the Muslim family and thus the Muslim nation.<sup>350</sup> Qaradawi also supports a project that will change Muslims, especially Muslim youth, as subjects.<sup>351</sup> Religion shapes people as subjects in certain matrixes of power and knowledge, so that they voluntarily carry out a particular way of life.<sup>352</sup>

This approach has manifested in welfare and education services that the state did not or could not provide. The Bosnian leader Izetbegović said that without a society where people practice Islam, an Islamic state would constitute a mere usurpation of power and rest on violence. Religious education, moral suasion and the creation of a righteous community should therefore precede the institution of an Islamic state.<sup>353</sup> This may also be linked to a view, for example held by Turabi and Abdurrahman Wahid, that Islamic society can exist and has existed without the structures of a state for centuries.<sup>354</sup>

However, Islamists like Banna, Maududi, Qutb and Qaradawi maintain that there can be no proper *din* without a corresponding political manifestation.<sup>355</sup> The boundaries between public and private are politically defined and can be transformed through political contestation, which means that Muslim minorities in democracies have a number of options. They may attempt to structure new power zones or reconstitute public spheres on a substate, state or transnational level. In some contexts, the main political relevance of

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<sup>348</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>349</sup> Robinson, op. cit., pp. 177, 202 and Westerlund and Svanberg, op.cit., pp. 133, 136.

<sup>350</sup> Commins, op. cit., p. 140 and El-Affendi, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

<sup>351</sup> Qaradawi speaks of building the youth mentally through culture, spiritually through worship, morally by virtue, physically through sports and socially by service to everyone. Davis, op. cit., p. 230.

<sup>352</sup> Jeremy R. Carrette, *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual corporality and political spirituality* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 149-151.

<sup>353</sup> For Izetbegović's view see Noel Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History* (London: Papermac, 1996), pp. 219-222 and Westerlund and Svanberg, op. cit., pp. 304-305.

<sup>354</sup> Roy, op. cit., p. 67 and Esposito and Voll, *Makers*, p. 207.

<sup>355</sup> Salvatore, op. cit., p. 206.

Islamic groups may be their redefinition of the sources of political legitimation, the boundaries of the political order and the model of citizenship.<sup>356</sup>

Discourses and collective identities constitute a field of meanings that permeate the structures of the productive, reproductive, political and organizational systems. Movements and states also produce meanings within structural contexts. These contexts include internal discourses, identities and organizational resources, and external political and cultural possibilities and constraints. The structures and produced meanings of movements and states may oppose, mirror or change in relation to those of the opponent in a continuous process.<sup>357</sup>

Strategies emerge from the interaction between such internal and external structures and meanings. Collective actors seek to reconstitute the codes and language that define reality, extract them from the predominant forms of representation, and create new identities and meanings.<sup>358</sup> However, the recreated field of meanings and identities may also lead to unintended and paradoxical outcomes.

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<sup>356</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>357</sup> Whittier, op. cit., pp. 292-294 and Melucci, op. cit., p. 388.

<sup>358</sup> Melucci, op. cit., p. 357.



### Chapter 3: The historical context

Islam was introduced to Africa through a number of diverse projects. In North Africa, Arab conquest promoted both conversion and the adoption of the Arabic language and identity by Berbers and Copts. In most of sub-Saharan Africa, in contrast, Islam spread through merchants and largely peacefully, accommodating local cultures and customs to a greater degree.<sup>359</sup> Relations between Muslim and European powers were both co-operative and competitive in different times and areas of Africa, also as far as the slave trade was concerned.<sup>360</sup>

On the southwestern tip of Africa, Islam was introduced by Asian and African Muslims brought by European powers as political exiles, convicts and slaves. In 1652, the Dutch East India Company (DEIC) established a victualling station in the southwestern peninsula of southern Africa. Islam, Muslim identities and Muslim politics at the Cape would emerge from this project.

While there have been considerable overlapping dynamics between them, at least six different political orders at the Cape would develop, namely an era of Dutch colonial rule in 1652-1795 and 1803-1806; an era of English colonial rule in 1795-1803 and 1806-1910; and an era in which the Cape formed part of a bigger political unit, first the Union of South Africa and later of the Republic of South Africa in 1910-1994. In terms of power and status, from the 1650s to 1994, Muslims formed a numerical minority subject to the power of bigger forces and groups. For most of the first era, a period of about 150 years, Islam also could not be legally practiced in public.

This chapter will give an overview of Muslims' long history at the Cape and focus on those facets and processes that contributed to their formation as a community, the conditions and actions that helped them survive as a relatively powerless minority, and the configuration of Muslim power, resources and religion by 1994.

#### The founding of the Muslim community

The rise of Western Europe, the Dutch "Golden Century" of power and prosperity, a need for resources and trade capitalism played a role in the establishment by the DEIC of a settlement at the Cape in 1652, with Jan van Riebeeck as the first governor.<sup>361</sup> Van Riebeeck was among those who brought slaves from Arabia and Malgasy with him, some of whom were probably Muslim.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> John H. Hanson, "Islam and African Societies" in Phyllis M. Martin and Patrick O'Meara, *Africa* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington/Indianapolis, 1995), pp. 97-114 on p. 97 and Ebrahim Moosa, "Islam in South Africa" in Martin Prozesky and John de Gruchy (eds.), *Living Faiths in South Africa* (David Phillip: Cape Town, 1995), pp. 129-154 on pp. 129-130.

<sup>360</sup> Hanson, op. cit., pp. 104-106, 108

<sup>361</sup> J.C. Steyn, *Tuiste in eie Taal: Die behoud en bestaan van Afrikaans* (Tafelberg-Uitgewers: Kaapstad, 1980), pp. 102-104.

<sup>362</sup> P.J. Coertze, *Die Afrikanervolk en die Kleurlinge* (Haum: Pretoria, 1983), p. 54.

The first group of Muslims among the mostly European DEIC contingent was the Mardyckers, Moluccan auxiliaries that were employed in defence of the colonial settlement against the Khoi and San.<sup>363</sup> However, none of these Muslims during the first forty years of settlement are celebrated by Muslims in South Africa as the founders of the Muslim community.

Dutch legislation decreed that Islam could not be practiced in public at the Cape, and even among Christian creeds only the Dutch Reformed Church was allowed. Offenders could have their property confiscated, be imprisoned, deported or tried and hanged. Most Muslims were also illiterate. Muslims may have had a variety of doctrines, internal contests and factional leaders linked to the diversity of groups. However, there is a lack of surviving written records and only episodic and often impressionistic knowledge about the dynamics of Islam during the first 140 or so years, comprising almost six generations.

Some 200 political exiles came to the Cape between 1652 and 1795, the first probably the rulers of Sumatra in 1667.<sup>364</sup> Many of them were prevented from escaping or becoming influential by isolating them on outstations like Robben Island or Constantia. Among them was Shaykh Yusuf or Abidin Tadia Tjoessop, a Javan nobleman of Macassar and later guerilla leader against the Dutch. He, his large family and some followers were brought to the Cape in 1694 and isolated at Faure.

According to Tayob, the evidence that Shaykh Yusuf established a community is somewhat tenuous. The political exiles were also unable to establish an overtly politicised Islamic parallel authority to the Dutch administration at the Cape.<sup>365</sup> Successful transmission of Islam did however occur. The residence of Shaykh Yusuf, who was also a Sufi shaykh and had memorized the Quran, became an assembly point for fugitive slaves, Muslims and other easterners until his death in 1699, when Dutch colonial records mentioned a rapid increase in Muslim numbers. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslim discourses, Shaykh Yusuf is described as the founder of Islam in South Africa.<sup>366</sup>

Almost 3000 people classified as convicts, but including political exiles and some clerics and people who had memorized the Quran, were brought by the DEIC from the Indian subcontinent and the Indonesian archipelago, and a few from Iran and the Arabian Middle East. Unlike the isolated early exiles, they were able to enter Cape Town itself and spread the message of Islam in night ceremonies at Muslim homes and on the quay in Cape Town. A political exile, Tuan Said Alawi from Yemen, became the first recorded

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<sup>363</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islam in South Africa: Mosques, Imams and Sermons* (University Press of Florida: Gainesville, 1999), pp. 21-22.

<sup>364</sup> Ebrahim Mahomed Mahida, *History of Muslims in South Africa: A Chronology* (Arabic Study Circle: Durban, 1993), p. 2.

<sup>365</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence in South Africa: The Muslim Youth Movement* (UCT Press: Cape Town, 1995), p. 40 states that after Shaykh Yusuf's death, most of his followers returned to the east. See also Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

<sup>366</sup> Robert C.-H. Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa, 1652-1998", in Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels (eds.), *The History of Islam in Africa* (James Currey: Oxford, 2000), pp. 327-348 on pp. 327-329 and Robert C.H. Shell, "Between Christ and Mohammed: Conversion, Slavery and Gender in the Urban Western Cape" in Richard Elphick and Rodney Davenport (eds.), *Christianity in South Africa: A political, social and cultural history* (University of California Press: Berkeley 1997), pp. 268-277.

imam at the Cape in 1755. He was appointed as a policeman and thus gained access to the slave quarters.

Many convicts remained at the Cape after completing their sentences, which played a central part in the formation of the so-called Free Blacks and producing the core of the early spiritual leaders among Muslims.<sup>367</sup> The social influence of the so-called convict clerics among Muslims was noted from the early eighteenth century onward. By the 1760s, the increasing financial strength and higher social status of some freed Muslims, the perceived risk that slaves may become a demographic majority, and the potential of religion as a source of public unrest, led to measures to stop the importation of Malay slaves. This coincided with more incidents of public worship by Muslims at the quarry since the 1770s, in defiance of the ban on Islam in the public domain.<sup>368</sup>

The convict clerics also started institutionalising Islam. Abdullah ibn Kadi Abdus Salaam Tuan Guru, a prince from Tidore in the Trinate islands, who was incarcerated at Robben Island in 1780, transcribed the Quaran from memory in Malayu and Arabic. He also wrote from memory a work in Arabic, with an interlinear Malay translation, entitled *Ma'rifatul Islam wal-Islam* (The Knowledge of Islam and Faith).<sup>369</sup> This text provided the small and scattered Muslim community with a clear exposition of Muslim belief, while also providing a bridge between mystical Islam at the Cape and scriptural traditions.<sup>370</sup> After his release, in 1793, Tuan Guru established the first Shafi religious school, the madressah at Dorp Street in Cape Town.<sup>371</sup>

Unforeseen political developments also produced opportunities. When the Dutch House of Orange monarchy asked England to occupy the Cape on its behalf after Napoleon invaded the Netherlands in 1795, a rich ex-slave, slave-owner and Muslim community leader, Frans van Bengalen, persuaded the British Governor General Craig to give permission for the building of a mosque. The Cape Burgher Senate thwarted his efforts, but after 1803, when Dutch representatives again took over the Cape from the British, he negotiated land for a mosque. This was in exchange for preparing two Muslim units to defend the Cape against an impending colonial conquest by England. In spite of that, England took over the Cape in 1806.<sup>372</sup>

Tuan Guru became the imam at the first Awwal Mosque. In other Muslim contexts, for example in the case of Indian mosques in the Cape in the late 1800s, community leaders or business people who were not religious scholars but who played an important role in the founding of a religious institution, also became a patron with direct or indirect social and political influence in the mosque. However, when a successor to Tuan Guru had to be chosen in 1807, after his death, Frans van Bengalen's influence was insufficient to override the wishes of Tuan Guru regarding succession. Tayob considers this as the first

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<sup>367</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 5-6 and Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", pp. 329-331.

<sup>368</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 42-43.

<sup>369</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>370</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid. Also see Achmat Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap: A social history of Islam at the Cape* (SA Institute of Arabic and Islamic Research: Athlone 1980).

<sup>372</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., p. 332 and Moosa, "Islam in South Africa", op. cit., p. 130.

step in a historical process whereby the imam achieved a paramount position at the Cape.<sup>373</sup> By 1875, according to the census, there were about 12 imams.<sup>374</sup>

In general, the first institutionalisation was brought by the later political exiles and convicts. However, while the political exiles and the convicts may have dominated the leadership and slow institutionalisation process among Muslims, most Muslims were slaves, ex-slaves or their descendants.

### **Slavery and the growth of the Muslim population**

Slavery as an institution in different eras and in different ways provided a fertile context for conversion to Islam. Some 63000 slaves were brought to South Africa by the DEIC and the British. The Cape needed labour and the indigenous peoples did not want to conform to the economic or political system.<sup>375</sup> The demand for slaves only grew. In 1701 there were 1 334 whites compared to 891 slaves, but by 1797 there were 21 746 whites compared to 25 754 slaves.<sup>376</sup>

The transfer of the colony to Britain in 1795 and again in 1806 stimulated slavery as an institution, due to stronger international links and an increased demand for slave labour to produce wine and wheat for the expanded market.<sup>377</sup> In 1807, however, the British abruptly ended the transatlantic slave trade, driving up the value of slaves.

Before 1700, about 50% of slaves came from India, about 30% from Madagascar and about 14% from Indonesia.<sup>378</sup> The DEIC baptized its slaves born at the Cape but the settlers, who owned most of the slaves, did not pursue this policy vigorously.<sup>379</sup> In terms of both the Bible and Quran, and based on the example of Abraham, Christians and Muslims could not sell their co-religionists as slaves.

In 1770, the government of Batavia ruled that Christians were obliged not to sell their Christian slaves. Since the right of owners to sell Christian slaves was restricted, also legally, there was no incentive for intensive Christian proselytisation. In addition, wine farming played a strong role at the Cape and many owners of wine estates preferred the sobriety of Muslim overseers and wagon drivers who did not drink wine.<sup>380</sup>

Another factor was the interaction between urban slaves and free blacks enabled by population density. Muslim free blacks, who were relatively prosperous, often

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<sup>373</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., p. 26-27.

<sup>374</sup> Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town* (Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg, 1995), pp. 21-22.

<sup>375</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 330-332.

<sup>376</sup> Richard E. van der Ross, *Myths and Attitudes: An inside look at the Coloured people* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 1979), p. 44.

<sup>377</sup> Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners: Biography of a People* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 2003), p. 90.

<sup>378</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 4-5.

<sup>379</sup> Richard Elphick and Robert Shell, "Intergroup relations: Khoikhoi, settlers, slaves and free blacks, 1652-1795" in Richard Elphick and Hermann Giliomee (eds.), *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1820* (Longman: Cape Town, 1979), pp. 116-166.

<sup>380</sup> Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., pp. 31-47.

manumitted their slaves, also Christian slaves, although some Muslims, including revered clerics like Tuan Guru, did not. This enhanced the standing of Islam among slaves. Some Muslims also showed great zeal in conversion among the much ignored lower classes.

By 1800, many slave family structures had a female head, but Islam played a role in bringing slave families together and enabling a greater role for fathers, since Muslim clerics performed marriages and Muslim free black kinship networks brought a sphere of freedom for slave families.<sup>381</sup> The religious schools conducted from the homes of imams also became the site of social bonding between Muslim Free Blacks and slaves.<sup>382</sup>

Escape was the most common form of resistance to slavery, or otherwise a refusal to work or to work at the pace demanded of them. Muslim free blacks harboured fugitive slaves, and contacts played a role in this regard. Leading Muslim figures like Shaikh Yusuf and Tuan Nuruman both supported escaped slaves, while Muslims were also involved in incidents of refusal to work.

However, the two slave uprisings, one in 1808 and the other in 1825, were both in rural areas and not related to Muslim politics. Slaves in the port city, where most Muslims resided, rarely dared to assault their masters in a zone where the authorities' control was stronger.<sup>383</sup>

After the abolition of slavery, the British established depots for so-called Prize Negroes, slaves aboard ships intercepted by the British navy at sea, ostensibly so that they would not run the risk of being re-enslaved upon their return home. Most of the approximately 5000 landed at the Cape during 1808-1856 were from Mozambique and turned to Islam. Shell interprets a document as stating that they also wanted to be considered Malays, pursuing a new identity in the process of upward mobility.<sup>384</sup>

Low reproduction, the sale of slaves from Cape Town to rural buyers and frequent severe epidemics curtailed the natural growth of the slave population. On the other hand, the importation of Prize Negroes and seasonal migration of Khoikhoi and freed slaves supplemented the local population.<sup>385</sup> Most freed slaves did not turn to Christianity, the religion associated with the slave-holders, but to Islam, and peer influence probably reinforced this trend. Moreover, the common experience of slavery probably contributed to creating more cohesion among the culturally diverse Muslim slave population.

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<sup>381</sup> Andrew Bank, *The Decline of Urban Slavery at the Cape, 1806 to 1843* (The Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1991), pp. 103-105, 155.

<sup>382</sup> Achmat Davids, "Muslim-Christian Relations in Nineteenth Century Cape Town (1825-1925)", *Kronos* No. 19 (November 1992), pp. 80-101 on pp. 89-90. See also Achmat Davids, "Imam Achmat Sadick Achmat (1813-1879): Imam, soldier, politician and educator," *Pages From Cape History* (Shuter and Shooter: Pietermaritzburg, 1994), pp. 71-79 on pp. 77-78.

<sup>383</sup> Bank, op. cit., pp. 155-157 and N.A. Worden, "Violence, crime and slavery on Cape farmsteads in the eighteenth century", *Kronos* vol. 5 (1982), pp. 43-60 on p. 54.

<sup>384</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 332-334.

<sup>385</sup> Bickford-Smith, op. cit., p. 13.

The first census at the Cape was only held in 1865. The numbers mentioned in the sources are therefore approximations and differ. According to Bickford-Smith,<sup>386</sup> in the 1820s, about 1,600 of the estimated 1,900 Free Blacks at the Cape were Muslims, and one-fifth or 1,300 of the 7,000 slaves were Muslim.<sup>387</sup> According to Mahida, the estimated percentage of Muslims among the slaves increased from 15% in 1760 to about 57% by 1830.<sup>388</sup> Muslims formed a significant component of both the Free Blacks and slaves.

Muslims increased from 3000 in 1822 to 15 000 in 1891, but the biggest increase was in the period 1770-1842.<sup>389</sup> This was also the period when the community with its diverse roots was becoming relatively more cohesive. The DEIC took care so that ethnic concentrations of the slaves did not take place.<sup>390</sup> The diverse population of Muslims only became a socio-religious group or community after 1800, with fewer waves of cultural newcomers, (more than half of the slaves were born at the Cape by then), the formation of an elite with property and some Muslim clerics, and admission to the public sphere.<sup>391</sup>

While conversion of slaves to Islam was strong, institutionalisation in schools and mosques remained a slow process. Although there were already about 3000 Muslims in 1822, there were only two mosques until the number of mosques started expanding shortly in 1844, after emancipation of the slaves in 1834.<sup>392</sup> Thus, some form of transmission of Islam occurred in the diverse Muslim groups at the Cape, but proper institutionalisation of Islam took more than a century to occur. Late institutionalisation was mainly related to the constricted public domain, but also to the political and economic position of most Muslims, widespread illiteracy and the internal diversity of the Muslim community.

### **Diverse doctrines and Islam as a source of identity**

In Cape Muslim historiography, the Shafi roots of the first Muslims at the Cape are often emphasized.<sup>393</sup> However, the successive groups of Muslims had very diverse places of origin. The Maliki school dominated in West Africa and the Shafi school in East Africa, East Indies and the Malabar Coast of India. In Bengal, the origin of many Muslims, the Hanafi school and some Shia streams had long replaced the Shafi school by the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Various Sufi orders were strong at the time in these areas of origin. Pre-Islamic cultures had also influenced Islam in southeast Asia.<sup>394</sup> It is likely that doctrinally, too, Muslims were a heterogeneous population during the first years at the Cape.

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<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid., pp. 13, 35.

<sup>388</sup> Mahida, op.cit., p. 7.

<sup>389</sup> Shell, "Between Christ and Mohammed", op. cit., p. 277.

<sup>390</sup> Steyn, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>391</sup> Yusuf da Costa, "From Social Cohesion to Religious Discord: The Life and Times of Shaykh Muhammad Salih Hendricks (1871-1945)", in Yusuf da Costa and Achmat Davids (eds.), *Pages From Cape Muslim History* (Shuter and Shooter: Pietermaritzburg, 1994), pp. 103-113 on p. 105.

<sup>392</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

<sup>393</sup> Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>394</sup> Yusuf da Costa, "The Spatial Origins of the Early Cape Muslims, and the Diffusion of Islam to the Cape Colony", *Journal for Islamic Studies*, no. 10 (1990), pp. 45-67 on pp. 59-60.

Transnational links with Muslims across the world at Mecca, with Zanzibar and the Mozambican island of Johanna, with its Iranian Shia links, also may have played a role in the development of mostly orally transmitted doctrines at the Cape. Given the diverse backgrounds, the red Shia and white Sunni turbans in visitor recollections and paintings of the early Cape, as well as references to deep doctrinal and personal disputes in the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>395</sup>, it is very likely that the later dominance of Sunni Islam and of a Shafi school was rooted in earlier doctrinal struggles with Shia doctrines and other Sunni schools eventually settled in its favour.

Sufi practices at the houses of Sufi masters and mystical Islam in the nature areas outside the city were appropriate given the controlled environment, marginal position and diverse and largely illiterate nature of the groups of early Muslims in Cape Town.<sup>396</sup> However, there are not sufficient records to establish the exact practices and discourses of early clerics and Sufi masters in the first period of more than 120 years.

Several factors combined to support the influence of a non-Western, Islamic frame of reference not only among slaves but among the non-white population of Cape Town. The smallpox epidemic in the city of 1717 eliminated most of the Khoisan, a potential African source of cultural identity. Other available group identities at the time did not provide symbolic, psychological and material advantages that could compete very well with those of Islam.

In the 1820s, about 1,600 of the estimated 1,900 Free Blacks at the Cape, many of whom had skills and property, were Muslims.<sup>397</sup> Occupational mobility of skilled workers allowed greater opportunities to attend rituals and ceremonies.<sup>398</sup>

During the first part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the regions of origin of most Muslims in SA had already experienced considerable cultural development, but were also experiencing poverty, autocracy and the structural decay of feudal socio-economic systems at the time.<sup>399</sup> Nevertheless, many of the immigrants came from cultures that had achieved more control over their environments than those of the Khoikhoi and Khoisan, which were the residents of the Cape area, some from further north in southern Africa, and black African groups, mostly from further north and mainly resident in the eastern Cape area. Several of them came with or developed much-demanded skills in the developing European-controlled economy and transmitted them to their descendants.

In time Muslims as such were perceived by many whites to be a kind of upper class among non-whites at the Cape. In general, they were in a better position than migrants from rural areas, also due to the skills acquired and passed on from father to son. Thus, Muslims' closeness to the centre of control at the Cape, which inhibited their ability to

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<sup>395</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 334-337.

<sup>396</sup> Moosa, "Islam in South Africa", op. cit., pp. 137-138.

<sup>397</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>398</sup> G.J.A. Lubbe, "The Muslim Judicial Council: Custodian or Catalyst", *Journal for Islamic Studies*, no. 14 (1994), pp. 34-62 on pp. 48-49.

<sup>399</sup> Da Costa, "Spatial Origins", op. cit., pp. 59-60.

practice Islam in public, also allowed them to take advantage of the level of development in the local economy and reinforce their influence. Becoming Muslim to some extent constituted a form of upward social mobility, which attracted new converts.

The ideology of the ruling elite also provided opportunities for Muslims. In the seventeenth and eighteenth century Christian identity served as a unifying political identity for the culturally diverse population of whites, variously estimated at 36% Dutch, 35% German, 5% French and 7% non-European or otherwise 34% Dutch, 29% German, 25% French and 5% non-European. Christianity was used to differentiate burghers from slaves, although the burghers did not appear to be particularly religious or close to the church.<sup>400</sup> It probably took more than a century after the settlement and successive waves of immigrants before a relatively cohesive white community appeared, speaking a local version of Dutch that developed into Afrikaans.

Being Muslim could not provide whites with the symbolic, psychological and material advantages offered by officially-sanctioned Christianity. At the same time, a lack of resources, combined with certain theological discourses and the organization of a Reformed faith and Dutch education meant that the church became a mostly white one with little missionary impact.<sup>401</sup> Islam provided a spiritual home to people in other groups and Muslim clerics were not as reluctant as Christian clergy to perform religious services and for example baptize children of mixed ancestry.

However, Islam did not only provide a spiritual orientation. Within the heterogeneous non-white population, Islam constituted one of the more cohesive, organized and autonomous identities available. It was an autonomous religious and cultural identity that asserted independence from European colonialism.<sup>402</sup> It also provided a distinctive identity from the emerging new identity of a Western burgher community in Africa.

Several factors supported its resilience in the face of socio-economic, political and cultural dominance and internal diversity. Muslim group cohesion was reinforced by a common language like spoken Malayo-Portuguese and later the precursor of a developing Afrikaans, geographical concentration of some Muslims by the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in certain areas in Cape Town, distinctive dress or headdress (a conical hat, later the fez), kinship, and educational, medical and financial support networks.

### **Space and community**

Cape Town was not imposed on a big indigenous settlement. During the Dutch colonial period, Cape Town remained limited in geographic and demographic terms, only developing from a Dutch and British colonial backwater into a modern city under British rule during the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid., pp. 42-43.

<sup>402</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 330-332.

<sup>403</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 11.



There were three overlapping but distinct regions within the Cape settlement, namely the port city of Cape Town, linked to international trade, the settled and slave-owning area of the southwestern Cape and the pastoral trekboer region.<sup>404</sup> Muslims predominantly resided in and around the first region of Cape Town, with a very limited presence in the southwestern zone and virtually none in the trekboer region. Rural slaves and the Khoikhoi were not really influenced by Islam.

In terms of the Dutch colonial empire and in terms of European cultural institutions and lifestyles, the Cape was a faraway backwater, the western-most outpost of the Dutch East Indies empire. Being a port city, Cape Town was open to interaction and influences emanating from Asian and Western countries. A combination of European and Asian cultures was contested and negotiated between company officials, often with Asian experience, burghers and slaves.

Within Cape Town, Muslims were less spatially defined than in the DEIC's Asian towns, due to many Muslims being slaves scattered across the town and because the prohibition on public practice for long prevented community buildings. In the period before emancipation of the slaves, Cape Town also maintained a more fluid pattern of mixing and association between different groups in residence, marriage and commerce than the rest of white-ruled SA.<sup>405</sup>

While group endogamy dominated in the European community, some miscegenation and marriages between white men and fair-skinned non-white women occurred, also due to the many single soldiers and sailors visiting the port city and the limited numbers of European women.<sup>406</sup> This gave rise to a new heterogeneous population group that was referred to as Coloureds by the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Studies on the genetic ancestry of Coloureds have indicated that while the ancestry of Malay Coloureds as a group consists of 33% European, 42% Asian and 25% southern African (Khoikhoi, Khoisan and Bantu) genes, that of other Coloureds consists of 32% European, 22% Asian and 46% southern African genes.<sup>407</sup> This indicates a significant ability to absorb a wide spectrum of believers ranging from Bengal Indians, Indonesians and East Africans to Arabs, Kurds, Persians, indigenous Khoisan, visiting Europeans and Afrikaner converts.<sup>408</sup> It also indicates significant differences in composition, which at least in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and perhaps in previous centuries were reflected in stereotyping, ascribed status and patterns of association and discrimination by some Muslims against other Muslims or Coloureds with a markedly southern African appearance.<sup>409</sup>

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<sup>404</sup> Elphick and Shell, "Intergroup relations", op. cit., pp. 116-166. See also Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 28-30.

<sup>405</sup> Shell, "Between Christ and Mohammed", op. cit., p. 268.

<sup>406</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 18, 37.

<sup>407</sup> Van der Ross, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>408</sup> Shamil Jeppie, "Commemoration and Identities: The 1994 Tercentenary of Islam in South Africa" in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Scholars Press: Atlanta, Georgia 1996), pp. 73-91 on p. 82.

<sup>409</sup> Van der Ross, op. cit., p. 31.

Apart from Cape Malays, other distinct Coloured groups that came into being were Griquas and Rehoboth Basters and Coloured identities consist of diverse histories and memories, detailed bodies of knowledge, cultural practices and modes of being showing a family resemblance.<sup>410</sup> During most of this time, Coloured identities were formed in a context of domination and the destruction of many of its autonomous institutions and histories. As a result, identity formation occurred within many limitations: limited control over self-representation, limited space for expression and limited resources. Identity formation and identity politics took the forms of self-assertion, borrowing, withdrawal, negotiation and transformation.<sup>411</sup>

To varying degrees, Muslim Asian cultures influenced local European cuisine, furniture, architecture, and the building, retail and tailor trades in Cape Town and in the southwestern region. Wage labour by often Muslim free blacks was possible due to the seasonal fluctuations in economic activity, allowing for higher rates of manumissions and allowing some Muslim freed slaves to gain some economic freedom and prosperity.<sup>412</sup>

In Cape Town various spaces emerged in which the broader diverse patchwork of Asian cultures among slaves could survive. Leisure activities marked and established differentiated, changing and contested cultural contexts of social identities in Cape Town. Before emancipation, they also inserted a strong Asian influence in urban underclass culture. Dancing, cock-fighting and horse-racing were among the activities influenced in this way, and group street singing by groups of Malay men was common in the 1750s.<sup>413</sup>

However, in the southwestern wheat- and wine-producing region close to Cape Town, rigid stratification between slaves and burghers did not allow as much socio-economic space for free blacks or Muslims as in Cape Town.<sup>414</sup> Landholding constituted a source of power and there was little manumission in a labour-intensive economy. Burghers' contestation of authority with Dutch colonial structures also succeeded in creating a distinctive burgher community in this area. Miscegenation also became frowned upon and the boundaries between groups became more stratified.

By 1770, the increased visibility of free blacks mixing with poor whites, the formation of an Afrikaner group consciousness and the rudimentary development of Afrikaans next to Dutch, which still dominated in the church and schools, supported the political mobilization by burghers for more rights to self-governance and freedom from colonial officials. This resulted in the dominance of the self-concepts of white people and Afrikaners among burghers.<sup>415</sup> The proclamation of the Batavian republic in 1795 in the Netherlands and the British occupation of the Cape, at the behest of the former Dutch

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<sup>410</sup> Zimitri Erasmus, "Re-imagining Coloured identities in post-Apartheid South Africa", in Zimitri Erasmus (ed.), *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town* (Kwela Books: Cape Town, 2001), pp. 13-28 on pp. 21-23.

<sup>411</sup> Erasmus, "Re-imagining Coloured identities", op. cit., pp. 21-23.

<sup>412</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic pride*, op. cit., pp. 145-147.

<sup>413</sup> Bank, op. cit., pp. 120, 130.

<sup>414</sup> See Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 23-57.

<sup>415</sup> Ibid., pp. 50-57.

elite, which had fled to England, only reinforced the demarcated identities of the southwestern Cape.

The colonial authorities and the demarcated burgher community with their distinctive interests were periodically at loggerheads, and in some disputes the colonial authorities used free blacks or slaves to strengthen its position or weaken that of the burghers, which sometimes reinforced the burghers' attempts to limit the power of the free blacks or slaves. However, Muslims as such did not derive significant advantages from this contest. The undertaking to allow public Islamic worship resulted from Muslims joining the Dutch colonial authorities in their battle against British colonialism.

### **The dominant 19<sup>th</sup> century Cape mosque discourse**

The imams after the early nineteenth century, when Islam could be practiced in public, created what Tayob calls a Cape mosque discourse. One component thereof was the provision of education and ritual services at rites of passage to the slaves, the poor and the Free Blacks. The rituals included the name-giving ceremony (*doepmaal* or baptismal meal), the *tamat* ceremony when children completed the recitation of the Quran in the religious school, marriage ceremonies and a dignified burial ceremony, including a solemn march through Cape Town.<sup>416</sup>

Teaching and rituals affirmed the authority of the cleric in the mosque, unified and provided a service to the congregation, and elicited the support of most members.<sup>417</sup> Teaching, rituals and unifying leadership were especially important in the context of a diverse, largely subordinate and often illiterate group in the Cape. The practices were predominantly Sunni and Shafi, but also restructured the representations of the Middle Eastern and South Asian centres of the Islamic world in local frameworks.

Mystical Islam remained present, but some forms were sometimes marginalized. The Khalifah or *ratiep* festival, which included the ritual of swords passing across unharmed human flesh, expressed the superiority of the Islamic sacred realm and the victory of the spirit over the enslaved bodies of Muslims. It was very spectacular and easy to understand for illiterate people, but became contentious in the 1850s, due to the participation of some non-Muslims, the use of artificial instruments and considerable noise. Some clerics stated that it had nothing to do with Islam, but in the 1930s, the festival was revived in Cape Town.<sup>418</sup>

A "Moslem Theological School" was founded in 1862, but since the overwhelming majority of Muslims were illiterate, the transmission of Islam was often oral and visual during the first two centuries. In 1875 an estimated 9% of adult whites and 69% of Capetonians from other groups still could not read or write.<sup>419</sup> These forms of

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<sup>416</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>417</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 27-31.

<sup>418</sup> Izak W. van Tonder, *Van Riebeeck se Stad* (Juta en Kie: Kaapstad 1950), pp. 188-189 and Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>419</sup> Vivian Bickford-Smith, "Leisure and social identity in Cape Town, British Cape Colony, 1838-1910", *Kronos* no. 25 (1998/1999), pp. 103-128 on p. 117.

transmission reinforced the authority of clerical interpreters, which was already strong since clerics often served as communal leaders too.<sup>420</sup>

After the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, free interaction between the local and the international Muslim sphere increased. Muslim clerics petitioned Queen Victoria of Britain to send them a missionary, since they were taxpayers. In 1862 a Kurdish Ottoman scholar, Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi, was sent to Cape Town. In spite of his unpopularity, after his arrival the Turkish fez replaced the wide-brimmed hat and the handkerchief as Cape Muslim headdress. A bilingual Arabic-Afrikaans book on Islam by Effendi, entitled *Bayad-ad-Din* (The Exposition of the Faith), was published in 1869.<sup>421</sup>

The building of the Suez Canal in the late 1860s opened opportunities for Muslims to go on pilgrimage by steam boats. This established strong links between Muslims in South Africa and Mecca and Cairo as centres of Islamic worship and scholarship. Those who had studied in the Middle East were called shaykhs and accorded a higher status of learning, sometimes marginalizing locally-trained clerics called imams.<sup>422</sup> Religious ideas from the region filtered through, Arabic as a language of religious knowledge became more important in the Cape, and access to knowledge became more important as the basis of a cleric's authority.<sup>423</sup>

Clerics who studied abroad formed schools through which they advanced their claims to leadership. They tried to introduce stricter standards, but mostly their higher status did not translate into the ability to change practices. Disputes were occasionally handled at a *bechara* in a mosque, a meeting of the community where conflicting opinions were presented to the public.<sup>424</sup>

In the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the congregation played less of a role and the discourse mainly revolved around imams as a centre of authority and standards for their peers. In contrast, later Indian-controlled mosques at the Cape granted more administrative power to trustees and trader-dominated committees than to the imams.<sup>425</sup> The status of the clerics, and their economic security linked to gifts by the congregation, resulted in fierce competition during succession.

The mosque discourse was unable to provide the basis for a religious representation of all Muslims in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some clerics used their support and authority in the mosque to make broader religious leadership claims, but did not succeed in establishing a single

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<sup>420</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Mosques, imams and sermons" (lecture), Summer School, University of Cape Town, 27 January 2000 and Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>421</sup> Nehemia Levtzion and Randall Pouwels, "Introduction" in Levtzion and Pouwels, *The History of Islam in Africa*, op. cit., pp. 1-18 on p. 11; Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 338-339; Steyn, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

<sup>422</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "The Muslim Youth Movement (MYM) of South Africa: Challenging the ulama Hegemony", *Journal for Islamic Studies*, No. 12 (1992), pp. 101-123 on p. 104.

<sup>423</sup> Tayob, "Mosques, imams and sermons", op. cit.

<sup>424</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>425</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., p. 44.

authority for more than 140 years after the establishment of the first mosque. Thus, Muslims approached both state courts and foreign Muslim authorities to serve as arbiters.

Between 1866 and 1900, over 20 cases related to imams, mosques and succession were heard in the Supreme Court.<sup>426</sup> In 1866, Muslims also solicited a view from religious scholars in Mecca on an issue of contention.<sup>427</sup> The courts played a role in providing members of the congregation with a say in the appointment of clerics. Tayob states that the numerous disputes motivated people attending the mosques after 1850 to express their expectations for mosque organization as well.<sup>428</sup> While this may be correct, the combined abolition of slavery in 1834, the granting of limited political rights in the 1850s and the material progress of some Muslims probably also contributed to greater assertiveness by lay Muslims.

The mosque discourse in the 19<sup>th</sup> century furthermore led to increased social capital and had broader socio-political effects. Tayob argues that the discourse did not establish the basis for a socio-political representation of all Muslims. The community-wide participation of the Malay Corps in a battle against the Xhosas and representation with the authorities on behalf of the Muslim community were indeed merely used to acquire a mosque for one group within the Muslim community.<sup>429</sup>

Tayob also states that in the case of the Cemetery Riots in 1886, Muslims actually responded to a threat to a key ritual in the Cape mosque discourse, namely the elaborate funeral procession.<sup>430</sup> The ritual was the main symbolic issue around which mobilization occurred, but in the context of anti-Muslim campaigns by the English media, a rise in active Afrikaner and English ethnic politics and other measures perceived by Muslims to be aimed at their religious precepts, these riots were also a communal protest.

While the Shafi-Hanafi differences were not insignificant, the communal protest provided a means to transcend differences and publicly assert Islamic principles, in sharp contrast to the hidden worship of Islam on the periphery of Cape Town a century before. Shafi and Hanafi Muslims were represented and united in the Malay Cemetery Committee established by Abdol Burns.<sup>431</sup>

It is noticeable that two of the major leaders of the Muslim community, Achmat Effendi and Abdullah Abdurahman, both came from Hanafi backgrounds, but were accepted as community leaders of the largely Shafi Cape Muslims. Thus, while non-clerics could not exert decisive influence on the Cape mosque discourse, and clerics and the mosque discourse had a socio-political effect, non-clerics mostly acted as the community leaders in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>426</sup> Mahida, op. cit., p. 26. See also Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*, op. cit.

<sup>427</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>428</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 31-32.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., pp. 36-39.

<sup>430</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 36-39 and Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 45-46.

<sup>431</sup> Davids, *Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., p.71.

## British rule and Muslim accommodationist politics

The British took over the Cape colony in 1806. The emancipation of the slaves in 1834 and a system of representative government in 1853, which gave political rights according to a qualified franchise, contributed to a political system under British rule with slightly more rights for some sections of the non-white population. At emancipation by the British ruler, Muslim clerics holding British flags led a procession of Muslims through Cape Town, which would later be transformed into the annual New Year's festival.<sup>432</sup>

The effect of the emancipation of slaves was an influx by freed rural slaves into the cities and an increased demand for religious community and services. By 1857, the Dutch Reformed Church, under social pressure, authorized the separation of Coloured and white congregations and the creation of a distinct mission church for Coloureds.<sup>433</sup> Small suburban churches, lay preachers and the legacy of mission religion, now without the baggage of slavery, shaped a Coloured Christian tradition and identity in the Western Cape that competed with Islam.<sup>434</sup>

The 1875 census found 7 656 Malays and 11 340 'mixed and other' people in Cape Town. Muslims were mainly Afrikaans-speaking, urbanized, and residing among the Coloured population. Of the almost 7,700 Muslims, there were 16 whites, 3 blacks, 11 Khoikhoi and about 585 'mixed and other'.<sup>435</sup> The marginal percentage of blacks and whites among Muslims would remain a feature until the end of the twentieth century, and would both reflect and influence the role of Islam in the field of political power.<sup>436</sup>

The Muslim elite consisted of small shopkeepers, fruit vendors, tradesmen, fishermen, artisans and a handful of professionals who could qualify for the vote. Their position meant that revolt was an undesirable avenue; the pursuit of equality before the law in a non-racial system based on the Cape constitution was considered a better option. They also constituted a kind of upper class among non-whites at the Cape. In the 1830s, the English press in general emphasized Malay honesty, sobriety, cleanliness and loyalty to the government.<sup>437</sup>

Most Muslim and Christian Coloured leaders pursued an assimilationist longer term political strategy. They tried to assimilate, not with the Afrikaners, but with the dominant English whites. Cape nineteenth century liberal values, environmentalist conceptions of racial difference, Christian and Muslim discourses about the equality of people, and the idealization of the dominant bourgeois culture shaped the strategy.<sup>438</sup> When about 14,000 white burghers, mostly from the frontier region, left the Cape in the 1830s to establish their own republics outside British control, few Muslims accompanied them and few chose to settle in the new republics at an early stage.

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<sup>432</sup> Shell, "Between Christ and Mohammed", op. cit., p. 272.

<sup>433</sup> L. Thompson, *A History of South Africa* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1990), p. 66.

<sup>434</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic pride*, op. cit., p. 35.

<sup>435</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>436</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 338-339 and Bank, op. cit., pp. 112-113, 119.

<sup>437</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>438</sup> See Adhikari, op. cit.

When a new system of so-called responsible government that gave more rights to local authorities became a prospect, many Cape Muslims believed that they would be denied some of the rights enjoyed under the 1853 constitution and the protection of the British government. Led by Sh. Achmat Sedick Achmat, they presented a petition containing between 1800 and 2000 signatures objecting to responsible government to parliamentarian P.E. de Roubaix, who served as their representative and often pleaded their case to the Sultan of Turkey.

However, De Roubaix supported so-called responsible government and as a result the Muslims approached Charles Aiken Fairbridge, who supported the abolition of government grants to some churches, to serve as their candidate in the 1874 parliamentary elections. The request was signed by two clerics and members of their congregation.<sup>439</sup> After a long and intense debate, the bill abolishing the grants was passed in 1875.<sup>440</sup>

The rise of Christianity and rural influx would eventually sharply reduce the relative percentage of Muslims among Coloureds. However, the local population of Muslims constituted 40% of the Coloured population in Cape Town in 1875.<sup>441</sup> Moreover, Muslims were among the most cohesive identity groups among the heterogeneous Coloured population and also in many ways the dominant group among the Coloured elite. This also emerged in a more self-assertive Muslim politics.

### **Assertive Muslim group politics in the 1880s**

Responsible government meant that the Cape parliament had more powers and direct authority over revenues. An ethnicized contest over resources developed in the 1870s. The English ethnicity that developed in Cape Town combined white racialism, English language and culture, pro-Empire outlooks and an emphasis on respectability. This ethnicity interacted with the growth of Afrikaner ethnicity, which at the time combined white racialism, a distinct history developing from the settlement project of Dutch, German, French and other European citizens at the Cape, a contested preference for either Dutch as language or the Afrikaans language developing from Dutch, and opposition to English imperialism.<sup>442</sup>

Both English and Afrikaner ethnicities responded to rapid urbanization and limited town resources. A mainly English alliance of businessmen and politicians favoured town development in areas where some of them also had interests. Several Afrikaner groups, including the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (Fellowship of True Afrikaners), founded in 1875 and the Afrikaner Bond, established in 1877, pursued more government support for Dutch or Afrikaans education and less for town development.<sup>443</sup>

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<sup>439</sup> Achmat Davids, "Muslim-Christian Relations in Nineteenth Century Cape Town (1825-1925)", *Kronos* No. 19 (November 1992), pp. 80-101 on pp. 96-97.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid., pp. 99-100.

<sup>441</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>442</sup> Ibid., pp. 38, 41, 49. See also Steyn, *Tuiste*, op. cit.

<sup>443</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 215-223. For a history of Afrikaans, see Steyn, *Tuiste*, op. cit.

Most Muslims formed part of those who performed seasonal labour, had casual occupations or were artisans, fishermen and tailors.<sup>444</sup> In 1875, more than 90% of Muslims lived in Cape Town, and the southern suburbs Newlands, Rondebosch and Wynberg.<sup>445</sup> Muslims constituted 6 772 out of 17 004 Capetonians, or almost a third.

Urban reform threatened sectors in which many Muslims were active, such as fish-curing, as well as Muslim rituals and practices, for example the impounding of contaminated holy water, the prohibition of the Khatieb ritual and the proposed removal of cemeteries outside the municipal boundaries.<sup>446</sup>

During the 1882 smallpox epidemic, fumigation, inoculation, hospitalisation and quarantining were also seen to be interfering with Muslim beliefs and practices. Leadership and ethnic mobilization against the latter measures were performed by Muslim clerics and wealthier Muslims like Abdol Burns and Jongie Siers.

The English press linked Malay resistance to urban reform to that of the Afrikaner groups and called the opponents the Dirty Party. The campaign against the Dirty Party coincided with stereotyping of Malays in the English press during the 1870s, including references to rowdiness, lack of hygiene, deceit, petty thieving and vengefulness. These portrayals were in sharp contrast to the portrayals in the same press in the 1830s, which emphasized Malay honesty, sobriety, cleanliness and loyalty to the government.<sup>447</sup>

The Municipal Act of 1882 aimed at weakening the geographically concentrated support of Muslims for the Dirty Party. Muslims responded to increasing English hostility by boycotting the 1882 town council and 1883 legislative council elections. However, the effectiveness of the boycott was limited since Muslim voters constituted a small percentage of eligible voters and the aim was not to weaken the legitimacy of the Cape political system, but to gain acceptance by the dominant group.<sup>448</sup>

In 1884, an alliance between Malays, blacks and white unemployed occurred, but the Municipal Act of 1885 restricted the franchise to principal tenants or occupiers. Calls for residential segregation of Muslims and blacks emerged during the smallpox epidemic to protect middle class supremacy and increase social control over blacks and Malays, but limited Cape government revenue restricted the possibility of segregation.<sup>449</sup>

Most Muslims perceived the closure of the Muslim cemeteries on Signal Hill and the selection of far away Maitland as a threat to their community's practice of carrying the dead to the grave. Community leaders like Burns, Siers, Achmat Effendi and H.O. Ally

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<sup>444</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 37.

<sup>445</sup> Mahida, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>446</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>447</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., pp. 40-41, 61. See also Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., pp. 62-82, Mahida, op. cit., pp. 29-31 and Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

<sup>448</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 195.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid., pp. 86, 102, 103, 105.



all participated in the campaign against closure of the cemetery,<sup>450</sup> and protest meetings drew thousands in 1885.

The annual parade of mostly Coloured people through the city at New Year, in which Muslim troupes traditionally play a prominent role, may have made collective mobilization easier. On 5 January 1886 about 3000 people participated in riots, in which several policemen were injured and 10 Muslims were arrested. Within days Muslims were allowed to bury their dead at Mowbray, considerably closer to Muslim residences in the Cape.<sup>451</sup> Protest politics clearly achieved more than negotiations and lobbying.

### **Muslim politics through Coloured mobilization in the 1890s**

In the 1890s political mobilization on the basis of Coloured ethnicity rather than a Malay ethnicity occurred. A secret deal between the Afrikaner Bond and the English section provided the framework of the Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892, which kept the non-racial principle but raised the property qualification, effectively halving the number of other voters in the city.<sup>452</sup> H.O. Ally and other Muslims then founded the Coloured People's Association (CPA) to oppose the Franchise and Ballot Act and Burns acted as a speaker at a protest meeting held in Cape Town in August 1892.

Muslims still used their communal institutions and networks to conduct this struggle. In January 1893, Effendi addressed a meeting of about 600 people in a mosque in Shortmarket Street, while imam Hamza and imam Talip promoted Muslim unity and no support for white candidates at different meetings. Effendi also appealed to non-Muslim Coloureds, including a small group of workers who still qualified for the vote.<sup>453</sup>

The election for the Cape House of Assembly occurred in 1894, and the raised franchise qualifications, government plans for educational segregation and social exclusion created a basis for cooperation between Christian and Muslim Coloureds. However, before the election, the Rhodes government had abolished the 'plumping system', which had allowed each elector 4 votes that could be spread evenly or used to support one candidate. The legislation aimed to prevent Achmat Effendi from being elected and he received only 710 votes. Under the plumping system, if all the people who had voted for him gave him four votes, he would have been elected, since the least successful candidate got 2 647 votes.<sup>454</sup>

To limit Afrikaner, rural and farmer control of central government and retain English, business and urban influence, white political alliances with black voters continued at the constituency level. After his links to the Jameson Raid in the northern Boer republic, the *Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (ZAR), in 1895 ended Rhodes' alliance with the Bond, the

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<sup>450</sup> Ibid., pp. 193-195.

<sup>451</sup> Ibid., p. 113. See also Davids, *The Mosques of Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., pp. 62-82

<sup>452</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>453</sup> Ibid, p. 197.

<sup>454</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., pp. 144-146.

erosion of black rights was stopped to gain black allies against the Bond, but social segregation was still practised.

The primary objective of most politically active Coloureds was to assimilate into the dominant society. Thus, the formation of separate political organizations was in response to intensifying segregation combined with an erosion of rights. When members of the Christian Coloured elite could join in a non-racial party on equal terms with whites, support for political mobilization on the basis of Coloured ethnicity dwindled again.

### **Muslims, Malays and other identities**

Initially, both terms relating to Muslims' religious identity and to their diverse ethnic backgrounds were used to describe them. Early Muslims were called Malay, Javaan, Mohammedan, Mussulman and Coloured Moslem in Dutch and British colonial records and in travellers' accounts from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>455</sup> By the late 1700s, the term Malay became more widely used by the Dutch authorities to describe Muslims and almost anyone who was not of Bantu or of European descent. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century terminology reflected a differentiation between Malays and Coloureds as two distinct groups.<sup>456</sup>

It is not clear from the records which names were most regularly used by Muslims to refer to themselves during the first 150 years. Malay ethnicity reflected a white-imposed label, but one which was eventually accepted by most Muslims in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>457</sup>

In the 1850s Malay was a synonym for Muslims among whites, excluding non-Muslims. By the 1870s the term Malay was adopted by several people so categorized to describe themselves.<sup>458</sup> A designation thus preferred by the dominant discourse of another group was accepted and filled with own meaning.

In the 1870s the term Coloured, previously also used for all blacks, came to be used for the descendants of Khoi, European and slave liaisons, while the 1875 census usually used the term 'Malay' to refer to all Muslims. Coloured was not used as an inclusive term in the 1880s, and a very assertive community politics was conducted by Muslims under the Malay banner in the 1880s.

However, from the 1890s, Malays increasingly also self-identified as Coloureds.<sup>459</sup> This could have been related to the relative decline in Muslim strength in the larger Coloured

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<sup>455</sup> Jeppie, "Re-classifications: Coloured, Malay, Muslim" in Erasmus, *Coloured by History*, op. cit., pp. 80-96 on p. 83.

<sup>456</sup> Mohammed Adhikari, *Identity and Assimilation in the Malay Community of Nineteenth Century Cape Town*, History of Cape Town: Work in Progress Workshop, 24 November 1989, p. 20.

<sup>457</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>458</sup> V. Bickford-Smith, "Meanings of Freedom: Social Position and Identity Among Ex-Slaves and their Descendants in Cape Town", in N. Worden and C. Crais (eds.), *Breaking the chains: Slavery and its legacy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cape Colony* (Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg, 1994), pp. 289-312 on p. 298.

<sup>459</sup> Adhikari, *Identity*, op. cit., pp. 17, 19.

group. The local population of Muslims constituted 40% of the Coloured population in Cape Town in 1875 but declined after that, constituting only 22% in 1904, especially due to rural migration and Christian evangelism.

By 1904, new production methods were also undermining Muslims' economic skills base.<sup>460</sup> The limited success of Muslim group politics in the 1880s, racial measures by the white authorities and the opportunity to expand influence by forming an elite within a broader Coloured group may also have played a role. During the next hundred years the Cape Muslim elite contributed to different alignments of Muslim, Malay and Coloured identities.

### Indian Muslims

After a few Malay labourers were brought to Natal in 1858, some 176,000 Indians of various faiths were brought to Natal, a British colony, between 1860 and 1868 to fulfil a labour demand. They included Muslims, who constituted 7-10% of the indentured labourers and 80-90% of the so-called passenger Indians, Indians who paid their own fares and arrived in smaller shipments during 1874 to 1911.<sup>461</sup> Legislation was passed in 1902 and 1906 to limit their immigration.<sup>462</sup>

The passenger Indians, called Arabs because most were Muslims who adopted the Middle Eastern mode of dress, soon dominated Indian trade. They also kept their social distance from other Indians and other Muslim Indians, saw migration as temporary and married their children in India, often to people from their villages of origin.<sup>463</sup> Social differences between Indian Muslims or a transcendent Islamic identity did not take a political form.<sup>464</sup>

Between 1873 and 1880, a few hundred Zanzibaris were also brought in as naval workers. They had to establish their own mosque, because most Indian Muslims did not accept them, and in terms of the Population Registration Act of 1950 they were categorized as a different group called Zanzibari Arabs under the Coloured category.<sup>465</sup>

Among the founders of the Indian Muslim community was Shaykh Ahmad, also known as Majzoob Bdasha Peer. A rumoured Sufi, he came with the indentured Muslims and became a trader and community leader after a release from his indenture. However, it was Shah Gulum Moohdad Soofie Siddiqui or Soofie Saheb, who instituted Muslim folk

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<sup>460</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>461</sup> Goolam H. Vahed, "Mosques, Mawlanas and Muharram: Indian Islam in colonial Natal, 1860-1910," *Journal of Religion in Africa*, vol. XXXI no. 3 (2001), pp. 305-335 on p. 306 and Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>462</sup> Geoff Cronjé, *Afrika Sonder die Asiaat – Die Blywende Oplossing van Suid-Afrika se Asiatevraagstuk* (Publicité Handelsreklamediens: Johannesburg, 1946), p. 30.

<sup>463</sup> Vahed, "Mosques, Mawlanas and Muharram", op. cit., pp. 307-309.

<sup>464</sup> Vahed, "Mosques, Mawlanas and Muharram", op. cit., pp. 327-328 and Goolam Vahed, "Changing Islamic Traditions and Emerging Identities in South Africa," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 20 no. 1 (2000), pp. 43-73 on p. 47.

<sup>465</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., p. 341.

festivals and established several madressas and orphanages for the Muslim minority among the majority of Hindu Indians.<sup>466</sup>

During the mining revolution (1867-1948) many Cape Muslims moved to the interior while some Indian Muslims moved to the Cape. The first passenger Indians arrived in Cape Town in the 1880s and they were joined by a new group of Natal Indians in 1897. In 1891, there were 538 Indians at the Cape.<sup>467</sup>

Most Muslim Indians spoke Urdu or Gujarati and tended to maintain their village connections and identities. The close-knit communities, linguistic differences, socio-economic trader status and their own Islamic institutions and practices contributed to differentiation from and sometimes disputes with the heterogeneous group of earlier Cape Muslims.<sup>468</sup> Some Muslims in the Cape considered them a socio-economic threat.<sup>469</sup> The first Indian mosque was built in 1892; unlike the clerics with their strong leadership role among the earlier mostly Shafi Cape Muslims, the mostly Hanafi Indian congregations were largely led by strong mosque committees dominated by merchants.<sup>470</sup>

Differences between Cape Malay and Indian or Asian Muslims persisted at the Cape. When the *Muslim News* became very critical of the MJC in 1968, MJC members accused it of being an “Indian mouthpiece” and of promoting Indianism.<sup>471</sup> Differences were also reflected organizationally. The Cape Malay Association was established in 1920 and the South African Indian Moslem Congress in 1923.<sup>472</sup>

However, intermarriage between some leading families occurred, blurring the distinctions. Some Indians also used Cape Malay women to evade regulations imposing restrictions on Indian land ownership.<sup>473</sup> In general Indians had a larger middle class than Coloureds,<sup>474</sup> and for some Malay and Coloured working-class people Indianisation was an indication of upward social mobility.<sup>475</sup> Since the late 1800s, Muslim Indians at the Cape, especially Konkani Indians, who remained prominent, also periodically cooperated with other Muslims to achieve communal and political goals.

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<sup>466</sup> Vahed, “Changing Islamic Traditions”, op. cit., pp. 45-47, and Shell, “Islam in Southern Africa”, pp. 327-348.

<sup>467</sup> Cronjé, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>468</sup> Jeppie, “Re-classifications: Coloured, Malay, Muslim”, op. cit., p. 84.

<sup>469</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., p. 57.

<sup>470</sup> Shell, “Islam in Southern Africa”, p. 340.

<sup>471</sup> Muhammed Haron, “The Muslim News (1960-1986): Expression of an Islamic Identity in South Africa”, in Louis Brenner (ed.), *Muslim Identity and Social Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Hurst and Co.: London 1993), pp. 210-225 on p. 215.

<sup>472</sup> Shell, “Islam in Southern Africa”, op. cit., pp. 340-341.

<sup>473</sup> Cronjé, op. cit., pp. 49-54.

<sup>474</sup> Kogila Moodley, “South African Indians: The Wavering Minority” in Leonard Thompson and Jeffrey Butler (eds.), *Change in Contemporary South Africa* (University of California Press: Berkeley 1975), pp. 250-279 on p. 255.

<sup>475</sup> Ebrahim Moosa, “Worlds ‘Apart’: The Tablighi Jamaat under Apartheid 1963-1993”, *Journal for Islamic Studies*, vol. 17 (1997), pp. 28-48 on p. 37.

Indian Muslims in South Africa organized in different ways to structure their environment, express their cultures and pursue their interests. This included religious authorities, voluntary associations and interest pressure groups, and joining bigger political groups that also represented non-Muslim Indians or blacks and Coloureds.

The first religious authority or Jamiat al'-Ulama, which also pursued Muslim group rights and developed Muslim infrastructure, emerged from the northern Transvaal province, where Muslims were in a new environment and perhaps more at risk from secularisation in the absence of a well-established communal and religious infrastructure.

The Indian Committee Durban was formed in 1890 by Natal Muslim merchants to publicise their socio-political difficulties, and they liaised with Bombay businessmen to petition the British government to ensure the protection of Indian rights. In 1894, Mohandas Gandhi formed the Natal Indian Congress, dominated by Muslim businessmen and professionals, to fight injustice against Indians.<sup>476</sup> The Hamidia Islamic Society founded by Haji Ojer Ally, who married a Cape Malay and was involved in Cape politics in the 1880s, was primarily a Muslim merchants organization that preferred passive resistance tactics.<sup>477</sup>

The Muslim Judicial Council, established in 1945 and dominated by Cape Muslim *ulama*, and the Natal Jama'iat al'-Ulama, established in 1952, continued the regional and ethnic fragmentation of Muslims.<sup>478</sup> However, there were also cases of cooperation. In 1958 the Jamiat convened a conference of Muslim organizations to discuss the implications of the Group Areas Act upon religious institutions, and in a test case in 1963 it succeeded in making the government accept the sanctity of the mosques.<sup>479</sup>

## Language

The ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the slaves and Free Blacks meant that initially there probably were many difficulties of communication and co-ordination, which probably obstructed the development of a common cultural identity. Some slaves used a form of Malay or a creolised Malayo-Portuguese, which was still in use in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the use of Dutch was accorded status too. To become free and benefit from education meant that a form of Dutch became the dominant language. Eventually most slaves and masters communicated in a form of Dutch that developed into Afrikaans.<sup>480</sup>

Muslim schools transmitted Malay and some Arabic in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>481</sup> In 1856, a book on Islam by Shaykh Ahmadul Ishmuniya became the first Afrikaans book published

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<sup>476</sup> Mahida, op.cit., pp. 41-42.

<sup>477</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

<sup>478</sup> According to Mahida, op cit., p. 70, it was established in 1950. See also Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa", op. cit., pp. 341-342.

<sup>479</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 56-58.

<sup>480</sup> Steyn, op. cit., pp.115-116.

<sup>481</sup> Davids, "Muslim-Christian Relations", *Kronos*, no. 19 (November 1992), pp. 80-101 on p. 93.

in Arabic script, perhaps related to doctrinal disputes.<sup>482</sup> The Arabic Afrikaans literature, which included about 60 publications between 1869 and 1957, experienced its zenith in the period 1895 to 1905, after which it reached a dead end.<sup>483</sup> While Afrikaans would become a part of many Afrikaners' identity and symbolic repertoire and eventually enjoy the support of most Afrikaner intellectuals, for most Muslims and Coloureds it mostly had instrumental value.<sup>484</sup> The Quran was only translated into Afrikaans in 1956.<sup>485</sup>

English had a higher status as the language of employers, the state and the Empire in the 1870s, while Afrikaans became the dominant language of poorer people in Cape Town, including most Muslims, and retained that position.<sup>486</sup> Among the Muslim and Coloured elite who wanted to improve their position, English mostly remained the preferred language. However, both the English and the Afrikaner elite shared a white racial and Western civilisational identity and the Muslim elite's effort of English assimilation was to fail in most cases.<sup>487</sup>

Indian Muslims spoke various languages, including Gujarati and Urdu, which sometimes competed with Arabic as the language of religious ritual and expression. In the 1940s, about 3 out of every 4 Indians in Cape Town still spoke an Indian language.<sup>488</sup> Socio-political networks also based on language initially may have played a role in Indian Muslim politics, but Anglicisation among later generations was extensive.

Since at least the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, basic Arabic expressions played an important role in religious education and grew as a status indicator among Muslim clerics. Arabic only became a recognized school subject in the Cape in the 1960s in the Muslim mission schools, but the focus was on Arabic as a religious language rather than for everyday communication.<sup>489</sup> A one-year course in Arabic was only offered at the UWC from 1975 onward.<sup>490</sup> Arabic also became more important in symbolic representations of Islam, as can be deduced from the names of mosques, the terminology used in sermons and discussions of Islam, and the names of Muslim projects and publications.

## The Union of South Africa

Segregation in the northern Afrikaner-led republics developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as an economic system mostly based on black tribal migrant labour combined with a political system that excluded competition from the far more numerous black ethnic groups.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>482</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

<sup>483</sup> Steyn, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

<sup>484</sup> Steyn, op. cit., pp. 264-283

<sup>485</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

<sup>486</sup> Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride*, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>487</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 71-74.

<sup>488</sup> Census numbers quoted in Cronjé, op. cit., pp. 133-134.

<sup>489</sup> Yasien Mohamed, "Teaching Arabic in South Africa: Historical and Pedagogical Trends", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 18 No. 2 (1998), pp. 315-327 on p. 317.

<sup>490</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 108.

<sup>491</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., p. 290.

The Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 between Britain and the two British colonies of the Cape and Natal on the one side and the republics resulted in a new political order in Southern Africa. In spite of a bitter guerrilla war in which the republics lost up to 15% of their Afrikaner population, they had to conclude peace with the British Empire and lost their independence.

When the Anglo-Boer War broke out, most Coloureds supported Britain, also actively in auxiliary units or support functions, because they hoped to turn the non-racial rhetoric into reality. They were separated from Bantu-speakers and whites in the British forces, which probably enhanced their Coloured group consciousness.<sup>492</sup>

The African Political Organization (APO) was formed in 1902. Achmat Effendi's brother-in-law, Abdullah Abdurahman, served as president from 1904 to 1940.<sup>493</sup> The APO constituted a broader project by the Coloured elite to express a proud ethnicity combined with respectability and to thereby gain greater acceptability and eventual assimilation. Assimilation was mostly sought with English-speaking whites, which were linked to a more powerful Empire and a stronger economic and political force in the Cape.<sup>494</sup>

Specifically Muslim enterprises like the formation of a Malay Fire Brigade and forms of internal control also formed a part of the project of increased respectability.<sup>495</sup> For example, when industrialization brought on the disappearance of older community networks of kinship, occupation and control, and the appearance of street gangs in the 1890s, Muslim reformers tried to stigmatise beer-drinking practices and street singing by fellow-Muslims as being un-Islamic.<sup>496</sup>

Nevertheless, Islam did not form a prime platform of the APO leadership. Abdurrahman promoted both secular and Muslim education, while his traditionalist brother-in-law Shaykh Muhammad Salieh Hendricks was in favour of Muslim women wearing the veil.<sup>497</sup>

The unification of four states and colonies into the SA state in 1910 changed the social and political context in which Muslims and Coloureds operated, inaugurating a more segregationist socio-political order than the one of the Cape.<sup>498</sup> The South Africa Act of 1909 denied Coloureds the right to be elected to Parliament and in 1930 the enfranchisement of white women only diluted the influence of the Coloured vote.<sup>499</sup> Many Muslims were disillusioned by the new constitution, but Muslim responses varied across a spectrum.

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<sup>492</sup> Bickford-Smith, op. cit., pp. 199-204.

<sup>493</sup> Ibid., pp. 186, 204-205, 210-211, 213-215.

<sup>494</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op.cit., 27-28.

<sup>495</sup> Vivian Bickford-Smith, "Leisure and social identity in Cape Town, British Cape Colony, 1838-1910", *Kronos*, no. 25, 1998/1999, pp. 103-128 on p. 123.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid., p. 126.

<sup>497</sup> Shell, "Islam in Southern Africa," in Levzion and Pouwels, op. cit., p. 342.

<sup>498</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit.

<sup>499</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

In addition, unification and the inclusion of Coloureds from the other provinces meant that Muslims became a much smaller component among Coloureds. During the twentieth century, Coloureds constituted no more than 9% of the population, but continued to be regionally concentrated in the old Cape province, about two-thirds resident in the Western Cape and about 30% in the greater Cape Town area.<sup>500</sup>

At the time of Union, there were an estimated 45 904 Muslims and Muslims constituted 6.15% of Coloureds, from 40% in 1875 and 22% in 1904.<sup>501</sup> According to official statistics, the percentage of Malays among Coloureds increased from 4.6% in 1936 to 6.4% in 1970,<sup>502</sup> but there are no indications why the sharp drop to 6.15% in 1910 took place, and this could have been a census mistake. In any case, Cape Muslims became a clear numerical minority among Coloureds in the twentieth century.

The APO promoted cooperation between racially distinct political groups against white rule, but also championed Coloured and Muslim rather than black rights. A preferential Coloured labour policy in the Western Cape since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, where blacks were traditionally absent, excluded potential black competitors.<sup>503</sup> The possibility of special advantages for Coloureds meant that the APO's opposition to segregation as such became less assertive at a national level from the mid-1920s.

APO and Muslim lobbying also were not without effect. In 1931, for example, 11 Muslim primary schools, first established in 1912, were subsidized by the Cape Provincial Education department, 7 in the Cape Peninsula.<sup>504</sup>

Abdurahman used Coloured politics as a base to promote Muslim interests, helped develop Muslim areas in the Cape and enhanced the acquisition of skills by Muslims to strengthen their economic position.<sup>505</sup> His approach obtained most support from Muslims in the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Interest groups directly based on Muslim or Malay identity was another avenue used. In 1903 the South African Moslem Association was formed to promote the cause of more schools for non-whites and Muslim socio-economic interests. However, it obtained limited support from the clergy and was short-lived.<sup>506</sup> Its successor, the South African Malay Association of Muhammad Gamiet, appealed to the Fremantle Education commission in 1910, that transmission of Islamic values and culture would be the primary objective for Muslims establishing their own schools. Formal recognition of a Muslim school, the Rahmaniyyeh Institute, followed in 1913.<sup>507</sup>

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<sup>500</sup> Ibid., pp. 17, 18.

<sup>501</sup> Shell, "Between Christ and Mohammed", op. cit., pp. 268-277 on p. 277.

<sup>502</sup> Van der Ross, op. cit., pp. 7, 9.

<sup>503</sup> Bickford-Smith, pp. 213-215.

<sup>504</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 58-59, 139.

<sup>505</sup> Mogamed Ajam, "Dr. Abdullah Abdurahman – Benefactor of the Bo-Kaap", *Kronos*, No. 17 (1990), pp. 48-58 on p. 57.

<sup>506</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

<sup>507</sup> Mahida, op.cit., pp. 50-52.



In 1925, the Cape Malay Association (CMA) was established and argued for full citizenship rights for South African Malays since they were neither blacks nor Indians, for whom repatriation was being considered in white policy-making circles at the time. Shaykh Achmat Behardien was among the senior clerics close to the CMA, which had Mogamet Gamiet as president.<sup>508</sup>

The National Liberation League, founded in 1935 by Cissy Gool, a daughter of Abdurahman, and the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), founded in 1943, had a limited impact, mainly among Coloured intellectuals. They emphasized non-collaboration with the structures of white rule and non-white unity against white rule on tactical grounds while recognizing Coloured identity. The Coloured anti-CAD (anti-Coloured Affairs Department) movement, the most active faction of the NEUM, was led by a group of predominantly Muslim Trotskyists, such as Goolam Gool, Hawa Ahmed and Ali Fataar. However, in general, Islam did not play a direct role in their perspective or motivation.<sup>509</sup>

### Group areas

In 1948 the National Party came to power. It continued the segregationist approach of previous governments but in a more systematic and pro-active way. The forced classification under the Population Registration Act of 1950 allowed the implementation of strict segregation, including the prohibition of inter-racial sex and marriages by the Immorality Amendment Act of 1950 and Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act of 1949 respectively.

The measure perhaps most resented by many Coloureds was the Group Areas Act of 1950. In Cape Town, the policy-makers aimed at removing Coloureds from slum areas, consolidating white and Coloured areas, establishing own Coloured townships that were not merely appendages of white towns, and separating the effects of historical and geographical mixed areas. However, its execution, the effect of forced removal on human dignity, financial losses and social dislocation and profit making by some white property speculators were the multifarious negative results. People from different social backgrounds were simply thrown together.<sup>510</sup> The removal of 65,000 Coloureds, including many Muslims, from the vibrant but crime-infested inner-city District Six area became an important symbol of anti-apartheid discourse.<sup>511</sup>

The MJC took a clear stand against the Act. It supported the emergence of the Call of Islam, a group opposed to the Group Areas Act, in May 1961. When District Six was declared a white area in 1964, the MJC called a national conference on 29 March 1964 and sent a letter of complaint to the authorities condemning the preferential allocation of

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<sup>508</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>509</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., pp. 203-204 and Faried Esack, "Three Islamic strands in the South African struggle for justice," *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 10, no. 2 (April 1988), pp. 473-498 on pp. 474-475.

<sup>510</sup> Steyn, *Tuiste*, op. cit., pp. 271-283; Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

<sup>511</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 505-506.

non-white land to whites and protesting the sanctity of mosques and the removal of people from the areas of the mosque.<sup>512</sup>

A senior cleric, Shaykh E. Behardien also informed the Group Areas Board that he was consulting with Muslim leaders across the world and threatened international implications if any steps were taken to appropriate a mosque.<sup>513</sup> This was significant, since many Asian Muslim countries had acquired their independence from colonial powers since the 1950s and often formed part of the Afro-Asian bloc against SA's white rulers at the UN.

However, some Muslims in the Malay Quarter also benefited from the Act. In 1934, almost the whole Malay Quarter, which has six mosques, was proclaimed a slum area. In 1943, the Afrikaner poet I.D. du Plessis had founded a group for the preservation of the Malay Quarter.<sup>514</sup> He wanted Muslims to be able to have a space that formed part of their history, one that preserved their heritage which they could mould in their image.

In 1952, the Quarter was declared a Malay group area, in which non-Malays could not reside. In 1953 Du Plessis, now Commissioner of Coloured Affairs, also spoke of Macassar, where Shaykh Yusuf lived and was buried, as a possible Malay Group Area. Under the Verwoerd government, in 1962, a section of the Bo-Kaap was declared a National Monument.<sup>515</sup> Du Plessis coordinated his projects with senior Muslim clerics like Shaykh Ahmad Behardien, who traditionally enjoyed great authority in the community, while also keeping in close contact with their community.

The Group Areas Act forced the relocation of many Muslims from the centre and southern suburbs of Cape Town. This led to greater financial vulnerability among many clerics and increased the relative power of trusts and committees, which in turn fuelled an even stronger provision of services by the clerics in a situation of increased need for community order.<sup>516</sup>

Forms of protest within the system were also employed on other spatial issues. When the Cape Town city council in 1972 tried to construct a freeway through the Tana Baru cemetery, where Tuan Guru and Abubakr Effendi are buried, Muslim protest led to cancellation of the project.<sup>517</sup>

### **Muslim and Coloured politics**

Already in the late 1800s, Coloureds were seen by many Afrikaner politicians as a tool used by the English opponents to win elections in marginal constituencies. This continued to be the case in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There were two main approaches among

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<sup>512</sup> Lubbe, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>513</sup> R.H. du Pré, "The battle for South End: Group Areas Removals in Port Elizabeth in the 1960s," *Journal for Contemporary History*, Vol. 24 No. 1 June 1999, pp. 36-48 on p. 42 and Lubbe, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>514</sup> Jeppie, op. cit., 92-93.

<sup>515</sup> Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., pp. 12-14.

<sup>516</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

<sup>517</sup> Davids, *The Mosques of the Bo-Kaap*, op. cit., p. 20.

Afrikaner politicians to solve this issue: a separate exercise of voting and political rights, in some cases with the aim of communal self-rule, and a closer cooperation between Afrikaners and Coloureds in the same political structures.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, NP leaders like Hans Strijdom and Hendrik Verwoerd supported the former approach, while JBM Hertzog supported the latter policy.<sup>518</sup> After 1948, the former approach would dominate. While special rights to some Coloureds in the Cape under British rule did not threaten white hegemony, many NP leaders considered the inclusion of Coloureds in white political structures of the whole Union as the thin edge of the wedge which could result in increased demands by the numerically stronger black groups for inclusion in one political system.

For about nine decades from the 1880s to the 1970s, the socio-political system reinforced Coloured identity. A high degree of consensus existed within and outside the Coloured community about the markers, boundaries and distinctive historical trajectory of the Coloured identity group.<sup>519</sup>

In the 1950s, Coloureds were put on a separate voters roll and other segregationary measures were implemented. These measures neutralized the direct influence of Coloured voters in white politics and also the dominant Coloured political strategy of assimilation. However, most of the Coloured elite continued to pursue assimilation into the dominant society and saw new segregationist measures as temporary setbacks.<sup>520</sup> Some sections of the elite chose a separatist strategy, due to the failure of the assimilationist strategy, intensified segregationism, minority powerlessness, and fears of being relegated to the position of blacks and losing their relative advantages.<sup>521</sup>

While the affirmation of Coloured identity politics was quite strong until at least the 1950s, it became more subdued thereafter. Nevertheless, positive affirmations of Malay, Griqua, Nama and Rehoboth Baster identities continued to play a role in local and broader Coloured politics.

A small minority in the unity movement in the 1950s unequivocally rejected Coloured identity, sometimes based on class solidarity and sometimes based on a common 'black' solidarity.<sup>522</sup> This reached its zenith in the non-racial approach of the pro-ANC United Democratic Movement (UDF) in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but was limited to a small minority of better educated and more politicised Coloureds and Indians.<sup>523</sup>

While Afrikaner nationalism, segregation or apartheid and white supremacy dominated NP policy in the 1940s and 1950s, there also was a current of thought that stressed far-

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<sup>518</sup> Bickford-Smith, op. cit., p. 123 and Steyn, op. cit., pp. 264-283, 304-305. For an overview of Afrikaner debates on relations with the Coloureds, see Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 388-394, 464-465, 503-507, 525-527.

<sup>519</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., pp. 3, 26.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>522</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., p. 243.

<sup>523</sup> Ibid., pp. 26 and 27.

reaching separation of the different groups to enable self-rule of each group by its own leaders in separate territories. Ethnic identities among blacks, not only a common racial identity, also became a policy concern. This policy continued after the establishment of the Republic of South Africa outside the British Commonwealth in 1961.<sup>524</sup>

A similar approach influenced policy towards Coloureds. The government-initiated Union Council for Coloured Affairs in the period 1959-1969 had at least one member representing the Malays and one member representing the Griquas.<sup>525</sup> From the late 1960s, the NP government began to offer Indians and Coloureds better resources and services than Africans, and they made major socio-economic advances.<sup>526</sup>

The Coloured Persons' Representative Council was introduced in 1969. The Labour Party, then led by Sonny Leon, rejected the government's racial policies. When the LP won 26 of the 40 seats in the election, the government added 20 seats to the 11 of the Federal Party, and the LP became the official opposition in the council. When the LP won the next election in 1974, the government nominated enough LP supporters for the LP to have a majority. The LP refused to give legislative effect to the budget, and eventually the government dismissed Leon from his post.<sup>527</sup>

To address unease in its own ranks, the NP appointed the Erika Theron commission of inquiry into the Coloured population in 1973, which recommended a direct say for Coloureds in various levels of government. The government accepted this proposal, but stated that this had to be combined with white self-determination.<sup>528</sup>

Many young Coloureds, including Muslims, became involved in street unrest against the political system in 1976 and 1980, and some joined the underground mainly black insurgency campaign led by the African National Congress (ANC) of Nelson Mandela and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

Black Consciousness as a discourse also became more prominent in opposition politics in the 1970s. It privileged black experiences and concealed the racial and power differentialisation between different groups in SA.<sup>529</sup> Many Indians and Coloureds were initially reluctant to refer to themselves as black. Only in the mid-1970s, after the Black Consciousness SASO group had gained enough Indian support, did it switch from the term non-white to black to refer to its constituency. Towards the late 1970s this rejectionism of Coloured and Indian identities found wider support. However, the

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<sup>524</sup> See Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 508-522.

<sup>525</sup> Theron report, op. cit., p. 346.

<sup>526</sup> Yunus Carrim, "Minorities together and apart," in Wilmot James, Daria Caliguire and Kerry Cullinan, *Now That We are Free* (Idasa: Cape Town, 1996), pp. 46-51 and Hermann Giliomee, "A politically incorrect view of non-racialism and majority rule," in James, Caliguire and Cullinan, op. cit., pp. 94-99 on pp. 96-97.

<sup>527</sup> *South Africa 1987/1988: Official Yearbook of the RSA* (Bureau for Information: Pretoria), pp. 167-168.

<sup>528</sup> Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., p. 558.

<sup>529</sup> Zimitri Erasmus, *Re-imagining Coloured identities in post-Apartheid South Africa, The Burden of 'Race'*, Conference Paper, University of Witwatersrand, 5-8 July 2001, p. 9.

ambivalence remained and most Coloureds and Indians never accepted their black identity as a primary one.<sup>530</sup>

In 1981, the Islamic Council of South Africa (ICSA), founded in Durban in 1975, condemned the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Republic's celebration and appealed to Muslims not to participate. In 1983, ICSA, the MJC, Muslim Assembly and several Muslim interest groups rejected the division of Muslims into racial groups and the Tricameral Parliament, which would exclude blacks.<sup>531</sup>

Only 29.5% of the registered Coloured voters in the Cape Province went to the polls, with polls even as low as 10% and especially in Cape Town. Only 24% of registered Indian voters went to the polls in the Cape, a stay-away by most Muslim Indians too.<sup>532</sup> This was due to widespread disillusionment with the government's alienation of Indians, well-organized opposition to the election, apathy and intimidation. Coloured and Indian chambers of Parliament with authority over own affairs such as housing, education and social welfare were established in 1984, with a few Muslims also serving in the Indian and Coloured chambers.<sup>533</sup>

In the 1980s non-racialist dogma and a rejection of an artificial Coloured identity dominated Coloured political discourse, also in the United Democratic Front (UDF). *South*, a newspaper established by two Muslim media activists, Rashid Seria and Moegsien Williams, was one example in this regard. However, practices among most Coloureds, and even many opposition movements, remained thoroughly racialised. While many working-class Coloureds had grievances about the white-ruled system, most Coloureds did not internalise a non-racial approach.<sup>534</sup>

A survey in July 1992 showed that 66% of Coloured respondents regarded themselves as Coloured and 92% of them did not support the UDF.<sup>535</sup> ANC leader Nelson Mandela's urging of the ANC in 1992 to recognize 'Coloured ethnicity' as a political force in the Western Cape was one signal that Coloured identity had again become recognized by resistance movements.<sup>536</sup>

### Islamic discourses and opposition politics

The Muslim Judicial Council (MJC) of clerics and scholars, founded in 1945, attempted to establish a mosque-transcending discourse deriving its authority from the *Shariah*.

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<sup>530</sup> Gail M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1978), pp. 277-279 and Vahed, "Islamic Traditions," op. cit., pp. 48-49.

<sup>531</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 109, 126-128.

<sup>532</sup> *South Africa 1987/1988: Official Yearbook of the RSA* (Bureau for Information: Pretoria), pp. 171-172

<sup>533</sup> Ibid., p. 169. For debates in the ruling group on this issue, see Giliomee, *Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 603-604.

<sup>534</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., pp. 270-280, 296.

<sup>535</sup> Centre for Development Studies, *A study of the potential voting behaviour of persons classified Coloured* (University of the Western Cape: Cape Town, 1992).

<sup>536</sup> Adhikari, *Hope, Fear*, op. cit., pp. 3, 291.

However, because many of its members also derived their authority and position from the mosque discourse, the MJC did not take decisive action against independent imams.<sup>537</sup>

In some cases, court decisions gave more power to the congregation by appointing a board of governors or prescribing a fixed procedure for the election of a successor. In a case involving hereditary succession in the Claremont Main Road mosque, the MJC argued that it was against the *Shariah*. The claimant, Abdol Roef, who had signed the 1961 Call of Islam manifesto rejecting apartheid in principle, rejected the authority of the MJC by appealing to Dr. H.F. Verwoerd, the prime minister and initiator of the policy of separate development, as being the highest judge or real authority.<sup>538</sup>

Muslim clerics carried out their work on behalf of Muslims, also interacting with government departments when necessary. In this framework, they also promoted the government's recognition of Muslim Personal Law. The clerics stated that it was the right of Muslims to have Islamic law applied to succession, marriage, divorce, guardianship and trust so that "our lives as Muslims could be more complete". They were indifferent to political involvement; as a result, there were no theological arguments for or against cooperation with the government.<sup>539</sup>

Those who used the system to promote Muslim interests and evolutionary change argued that the Treaty of Hudaibiya between the Prophet Muhammad and his political enemies in Mecca that served Muslim interests had established a precedent in this regard. If state laws would go against the *Shariah*, the Muslim community would reject such laws. Thus, the state could impose its will, but not an un-Islamic will upon Muslims. The existing machinery was used to prepare for a better future, as a means to an end.<sup>540</sup>

As indicated above, the MJC partially resisted the Group Areas Act, but most members of the MJC did not question the legitimacy of the system. In a ruling dated 22 April 1966, the MJC decided that "despite the general political, social and economic system under which Muslims have to live, no one can honestly deny that at present the Muslims enjoy the privilege to practice a good amount of the observances of Islam without any hostility or persecution. If we judge in terms of our yardstick into which category South Africa falls, then we have to place it in the category of Darul Islam."<sup>541</sup>

On 27 September 1969 imam Haron, an MJC member who had become involved in the Pan Africanist Congress and black resistance politics against white rule, died in police custody after four months.<sup>542</sup> He became a martyr in small resistance circles and even the broader Muslim public, but the tradition of resistance politics he represented continued to enjoy minority support among Muslims.

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<sup>537</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., p. 58.

<sup>538</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 48-53.

<sup>539</sup> J.A. Naude, "South Africa: The Role Of A Muslim Minority In A Situation Of Change", *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 13:1 January 1992, pp. 17-32 on pp. 26-27.

<sup>540</sup> Ibid.

<sup>541</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-19.

<sup>542</sup> Ibid.

The MJC became affiliated to the United Democratic Front in 1983 and declared apartheid in all its forms to be forbidden (*haram*).<sup>543</sup> The president of the MJC, Shaykh Nazeem Mohamed, stated in an Islamist aside in 1985 at the funeral of a youth who died in the unrest that the major thrust of the struggle was to present Islam as the solution to the country's problems. "It is not a pipedream to think that this country would in future be governed by the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*."<sup>544</sup>

On 23 October 1986 the General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church passed a resolution that Islam was a false religion and a threat to Christianity in SA, Africa and the world. It also expressed concern at the conversion of many blacks to Islam since 1976 and warned that the involvement of many Muslims in revolutionary action could harm inter-group relations. The MJC responded by a statement read out at all mosques stating that apartheid was the real danger and that there was a new onslaught on Muslims.<sup>545</sup> However, in general the MJC played a passive role in resistance politics and was periodically criticised on this score by more activist MJC members like Maulana Faried Esack and imam Hassan Solomons.<sup>546</sup>

Young educated Muslims in the Muslim Teachers Association probably first used Islam as a basis for opposition politics after 1948. They rejected Du Plessis' use of Malay identity to subvert the Population Registration Act and opposed the Voortrekker celebrations, which may have influenced the MJC to do likewise.<sup>547</sup> Several youth groups continued in this tradition. The relocation of families and imams under the Group Areas Act provided a free space for young Muslims and students to participate in the Stegman Road mosque of imam Abdullah Haron, where both the young and the imam introduced Islamist and socio-political ideas reinforcing resistance to the political system.<sup>548</sup>

The Muslim Assembly (MA), established in 1964 by Dr. Hoosen Kotwal, was focused on providing a moderate Islamic and perhaps Islamist base for professionals away from the authority of clerics in the MJC.<sup>549</sup> It monitored the shortcomings of the political system, but focused on building a base for professionals.

The Muslim Youth Movement (MYM), established by Indian Muslims in 1970, adopted the ideas of Rida and Abdu, Quetb and Maududi and pursued an Islamicisation of society and Islam as a broader identity.<sup>550</sup> In a second phase, it tried to respond to attacks by the clerics through intensive training and education, but political developments limited its relevance.<sup>551</sup> However, in political terms it mostly remained a centrist organization.

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<sup>543</sup> Ibid.

<sup>544</sup> Lubbe, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>545</sup> Ibid., pp. 48-49.

<sup>546</sup> Esack, "Three Islamic strands", op. cit., p. 486-487.

<sup>547</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

<sup>548</sup> Tayob, *Mosques*, op. cit., pp. 53-59.

<sup>549</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. 88-89.

<sup>550</sup> Esack, "Three Islamic strands", op. cit., pp. 479-480.

<sup>551</sup> Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence*, op. cit., pp. xiii-xiv.

After the successful Iranian Revolution in 1979, Qibla was established in 1980 at the Cape. Qibla promoted a revolutionary Islamist discourse in which a non-ethnic Muslim vanguard would lead a struggle of black, Indian and Coloured groups against white rule in the name of Islam. However, insurgent activities by its members were quickly curtailed by the state. A MJC-sponsored group of enforcers called the A-team attacked Qibla members in 1985, and it became an outspoken opponent to the negotiation process and settlement between the NP and ANC after 1990.<sup>552</sup>

The Call of Islam (COI), established in 1984 by Esack and Ebrahim Rasool, an ANC provincial leader after 1994, created an Islamic liberation theology that underemphasized or concealed differences with Christian, Marxist and ethnic opponents of white rule to confront the common enemy. Islam was reinterpreted to a broader meaning of submission to the will of Allah by being a witness to justice, and non-collaboration with the oppressive regime seen as a Divine injunction. The COI argued that the Muslim Personal Law system developed by the government was aimed at restructuring SA's Muslim community for easier control, and criticized the clerics for co-operating with this initiative without consulting the community.<sup>553</sup>

Lastly, some Muslims used Islam as the platform for an own community identified as Muslim first but abstaining from the political system. They included the Port Elizabeth-based monthly *Majlis*, which described participation in the political system as un-Islamic. Muslims could only operate under Islamic leaders using permissible methods. If this was not possible, Muslims were required to reform their lives to reflect Islam, trust in Allah to guide their lives and accept in faith whatever will happen politically.<sup>554</sup>

Young Muslims and intellectuals in the MYM, Qibla, the Call of Islam and *Majlis* aimed to change the dominant Islamic discourses among Muslims. However, in general, political competition and community, ethnic and economic concerns played a more important role than new interpretations of Islam in shaping Muslim opposition politics. Individual Muslim activists played an important role in the struggle of the ANC, UDF and PAC. However, in the view of MJC secretary general Shaykh Ahmat Sedick, most Coloured and Indian Muslims did not clearly support these groups, and many in fact adhered to quietist positions and non-involvement in politics.<sup>555</sup>

### **The period of transition**

In the nine decades until 1994, all population groups showed considerable population growth, with a more than fourfold increase among Coloureds, Asians and blacks, also among Muslims, and a more than threefold increase in white numbers by 1970, when the

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<sup>552</sup> Esack, "Three Islamic strands," op. cit., p. 484. For a broader discussion of Qibla's discourse, see C. du P. le Roux and Iqbal Jhazbay, "The Contemporary Path of Qibla Thought: A Hermeneutical Reflection", *Journal for Islamic Studies*, vol. 12 (1992), pp. 84-100 and Achmad Cassiem, *Eid Message: The intellectual roots of the oppressed and Islam's triumph over apartheid* (Qibla: Athlone, 1992).

<sup>553</sup> Naude, op. cit., pp. 2-26.

<sup>554</sup> Ibid., pp. 27-29.

<sup>555</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 23 February 2000.



system of white rule was still at its apex of power.<sup>556</sup> Demographics and economic integration between the different groups in SA increasingly made the existing political system unsustainable. The campaign of economic isolation of SA, internal insurgency, the legitimacy crisis of the system among black groups and the assessments of the NP government of F.W. de Klerk eventually resulted in a negotiated settlement.<sup>557</sup>

On 2 February 1990, then president F.W. de Klerk unbanned the ANC and PAC and released Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. Muslims responded in various ways. Pro-ANC Muslims organized the first National Muslim Conference at the University of the Western Cape in May 1990. Some delegates were opposed to negotiations, since they were considered irrelevant to Muslims or against the interests of the oppressed, while most accepted negotiations on condition that they lead to a just dispensation.<sup>558</sup> Within the MJC, there was considerable division on the implications for Muslims and participation in elections.

The first national Islamic Party was also launched in Cape Town by a school principal, Naushad Omar. It was in favour of a multi-party democracy and negotiations between the NP and the ANC, against apartheid or any form of discrimination, but accepted that minority rights in terms of religion, language and culture should be protected and advocated a geographical federation, a free-market system, equal rights for women and a bill of rights not in conflict with the *Shariah*.<sup>559</sup> However, it never linked closely with the clerics and remained without marked success.

Muslims also organized outside formal politics and institutionally. Already in 1989, Muslim schools trying to bridge the gap between Islamic and Western secular education formed the Association of Muslim Schools to support each other.<sup>560</sup> In 1990, local Muslim academics and activists established the Islamic College to promote the understanding and implementation of an Islamic value system, teaching Islamic jurisprudence and philosophy, Arabic, Islamic civilization, research methodology and comparative religion.<sup>561</sup>

By 1994, greater Cape Town still constituted the main geographical site of Cape Muslim communities. According to an oral legend still transmitted among Muslims, Tuan Guru stated that the shrines on sites in and around Cape Town would form a protective circle within which Cape Muslims would be safe from fire, famine, plague, earthquake and tidal waves.<sup>562</sup> Thus, the pattern of Muslim religious and historically important places in and

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<sup>556</sup> *South Africa 1976: Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa* (Perskor: Pretoria, 1976), p. 30.

<sup>557</sup> See Heribert Adam, Frederick van Zyl Slabbert and Kogila Moodley, *Comrades in Business: Post-Liberation Politics in South Africa* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 1997), pp. 51-65 and Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., pp. 635-647 for a comprehensive analysis of the reasons behind this power-shift.

<sup>558</sup> Mahida, op. cit., pp. 142-143.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., pp. 143-146.

<sup>560</sup> Ibid., pp. 139-141.

<sup>561</sup> Ibid., pp. 146-147.

<sup>562</sup> I.D. du Plessis, *The Cape Malays: History, Religion, Tradition, Folk Tales, the Malay Quarter* (A.A. Balkema: Cape Town, 1972), p. 20.

around Cape Town interacted with the local symbolic order and reinforced a sacred order created by decades of boundary-making and transmission.

### **Islamic discourses, Muslim identities and group politics**

The Muslim population was not a static homogeneous population. Initially, it encompassed diverse ethnicities, cultures and Islamic doctrines from India, Madagascar, Zanzibar, Ceylon and Indonesia, with new groups periodically being added.<sup>563</sup> This population grew, changed and was constituted by several contesting identities and discourses in different local and international economic and political orders, in interaction with developing Afrikaner and Coloured identity groups. Eventually, a heterogeneous community with both international and local links and sites of interaction emerged.

While much of the first 140 years is unknown, in general Islamic discourses also underwent changes, influenced by international developments, cast in local forms and slowly institutionalised once they were allowed in the public domain. Internal contestation also occurred, resulting in different power configurations between clerics, congregations and mosque committees linked to class and ethnicity.

Muslim communal identities were recast several times, also in interaction with recast Coloured and Afrikaner identities. For example, initially, both terms relating to Muslims' religious identity and to their diverse ethnic backgrounds were used to describe them, including the terms Javaan, Mohammedan, Mussulman and Coloured Moslem. By the late 1700s, the term Malay became more widely used by the Dutch authorities to describe Muslims and almost anyone who was not Bantu or of European descent.

However, those belonging to the group also reappropriated the identity in such a way that being Malay became a multi-cultural, multi-racial construct privileging Islam, reinterpretations of Southeast Asian culture and some local Cape dimensions. In the 19th century, a clear separation between Malay identity and a developing Coloured identity also emerged, while in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Malay identity often became subsumed under a broader Coloured identity.

While Islamic and communal discourses played a role, and even Islamist discourses appeared in the 1970s, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Muslims often conducted politics using their networks, assets and shared identities within broader Coloured and Indian politics. White and black Muslims in general formed marginal minorities, both in their racial and ethnic groups and among Muslims themselves. Whereas most Coloureds pursued assimilationism with a dominant white group, Indians did not, and this difference also shaped a differential Muslim politics. However, non-racialism and a common political identity with blacks received equally limited support among Coloured and Indian Muslims.

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<sup>563</sup> Yusuf da Costa, "The Spatial Origins of the Early Cape Muslims and the Diffusion of Islam to the Cape Colony", *Journal for Islamic Studies*, No. 10, 1990, pp. 45-67 on pp. 61-62. See also Coertze, op. cit., p. 54.

Nine broadly political approaches would be followed by Muslims during the century or more before 1994, sometimes in combination or in succession of different periods or environments.

Firstly, some Muslims focused on building Muslim institutions and self-sufficiency. Many Indian Muslims simply abstained from politics,<sup>564</sup> but focused on increasing their economic, professional and local power base. This may be regarded as a second, perhaps indirect political approach. As was the case in politics in general, kinship networks played an important role in this regard. Thirdly, some Muslims tried to influence outside powers, including Britain or India, to gain protection against local measures. Fourthly, some lobbied local authorities and business actors to achieve concessions, for example on Muslim schools, housing and group areas.

Fifthly, some Muslims collaborated with the government of the day. Their reasons varied: patronage, expedience and pragmatism, or belief in the sincerity of the program of political rights for Coloureds or the NP's program of separate but equal development. Fear of a black takeover and political unpredictability also played a role.<sup>565</sup> Indian-black relations, for example, were marked by past clashes in Cato Manor in 1949 and Inanda in 1985, as well as the expulsion of Asians from East Africa.<sup>566</sup>

A sixth approach was to use the system against itself, as demonstrated by the Labour Party's obstructionism, and to conduct protests without questioning the parameters of the political system, as happened during the Cemetery Riots. A seventh group among Muslims saw themselves as powerless, either because Muslims were a minority or because they were intimidated to the point of apathy by the infiltration of political resistance groups by the security forces.<sup>567</sup> An eighth approach was to promote passive resistance, non-collaboration and unity against white rule.<sup>568</sup> A ninth group joined the insurgency of the ANC and PAC or their support structures.<sup>569</sup>

As a result of the marginal demographic and political position of Coloureds and Indians, pragmatism, incrementalism and the first five approaches dominated Coloured and Indian politics. Most Muslims came from these groups and also conducted politics within these frameworks. However, the political order since 1994 would challenge the feasibility of these approaches in a different context.

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<sup>564</sup> Robert Johnson, *Indians and Apartheid in South Africa: The failure of resistance* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Massachusetts, 1973), p. x.

<sup>565</sup> Moodley, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>566</sup> Yunus Carrim, "Minorities together and apart," in Wilmot James, Daria Caliguire and Kerry Cullinan, *Now That We are Free* (Idasa: Cape Town, 1996), pp. 46-51.

<sup>567</sup> Moodley, op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>568</sup> The National Indian Congress (NIC), in which the committed senior SA Communist Party activist Yusuf Dadoo was a leader, directly challenged the segregation laws to show that the government could not implement them. Johnson, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>569</sup> See Tom Lodge, *Black Politics in South Africa since 1945* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg, 1983) for a general overview of resistance politics.

## Chapter 4: Clerics and sacred order in a diverse community

### The diverse Muslim population

The term Muslim is used here as a common denominator for those calling themselves Muslim. The usage is also joined with an assumption that the people concerned identified themselves not only as Muslims, but identified themselves and were identified by others in terms of various categories related to region, nationality, race, culture, language, socio-economic status, profession, gender and age.

The term does not imply that those described considered themselves in terms of their self-identification first of all Muslims or even predominantly Muslim, or that Islam was the main determinant of their conduct and actions.<sup>570</sup> In addition, the definition is used with an assumption that all the above categories, even in combination, at best constitute a partial framework of understanding of the personal life-stories and also the political choices of individual Muslims.

During the period 1994-2000, Muslims in the Western Cape constituted an internally heterogeneous population in terms of the mentioned categories. Moreover, the Muslim population lived in a region marked by a long history of rule by non-Muslim Westerners and politics marked by racial discourses and socio-economic disparities. For example, many Muslims constituted a strong and visible minority in the heterogeneous Coloured population, nationally a minority, but a majority in the province. Other Muslims formed a majority among the small regional and national minority of Indians.<sup>571</sup>

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Coloured identity had been shaped by several factors. These included the intermediate status and limited power of Coloureds relative to whites and blacks; the idea that Coloured identity was mainly related to miscegenation and lacked cultural distinctiveness and tradition; and Coloured identity as a residual category in which smaller groups that were not white or black were placed, for example the Malay, Griqua<sup>572</sup>, Nama and Rehoboth Baster groups.

In addition, there was a low status allocation by the ruling groups to cultural features widely accepted as distinctively Coloured, for example the Cape Afrikaans vernacular, and the inability of intellectuals within the community to produce or transmit a set of positive symbols for rallying the group.<sup>573</sup> Thus, Coloured identity also carried derogatory meanings for some Coloureds. In the Coloured community in general there was considerable sensitivity to racial features, and fine gradations of hair and skin colour

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<sup>570</sup> Clerics themselves sometimes distinguished between Muslims and believers. Interview with Maulana Ebrahim Khan, 22 November 2000.

<sup>571</sup> Mohammed Adhikari, *The Burden of Race? 'Whiteness' and 'Blackness' in Modern South Africa*, History Workshop & Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, 5-8 July 2001, p. 16.

<sup>572</sup> A. Morris, "The Griqua and the Khoikhoi: Biology, ethnicity and the construction of identity", *Kronos* No. 24 (11/1997), pp. 106-118.

<sup>573</sup> Zimitri Erasmus, *Re-imagining Coloured identities in post-Apartheid South Africa, The Burden of 'Race'*, Conference Paper, University of Witwatersrand, 5-8 July 2001, pp. 2-3.

were important determinants of status. In some cases, stereotypical associations with impurity, alcohol abuse, sexual promiscuity, shame, jollity and lack of economic and political power occurred.<sup>574</sup>

Adhikari states that while Coloured identity was fluid and changing too, its continuities during the era of white rule were more important in its functioning.<sup>575</sup> However, part of its continuities was a consciousness and presence of many cultural hybridities produced under conditions of political marginalisation and socio-economic superiority in relation to most people from black ethnic groups.<sup>576</sup>

After the fall of the white-ruled system, one of the foundations on which the dominant Coloured identities and their intermediate socio-political positions rested, a recasting of Coloured identities took place. This coincided with a recasting of white and Afrikaner identities, no longer supported by state power, and of black identities, reinforced by new projects of political and economic empowerment.<sup>577</sup>

Some Coloured thinkers promoted identification with the slavery past of many Coloureds, others an exclusive Coloured identity. Still others emphasized an African identity, non-racialism or a South African rainbow nationalism. A fragmented movement emphasizing Khoisan revivalism affirmed Khoisan identity as authentic and rejected Coloured identity as a colonial construct. It represented a new claim for a special status, especially in the Western Cape, since Khoisans were the true indigenes of SA, but would also have excluded Muslims and Malays.<sup>578</sup>

None of these movements established complete hegemony, but the total effect of the contestation was a stronger assertion of Coloured identity politics. For Coloureds situated between black and white groups, Muslim identities allowed the option of a symbolic framework of identity that was neither controlled by blacks nor whites. They also provided an alternative civilisational complex and an own platform for self-representation to the dominant and imposed Western one. In addition, a more assertive Muslim identity and framework imposed some form of provisional order and respectability in a context of social anomie, socio-economic underdevelopment and political marginalisation. It was an expression of a differentiation from other Coloureds, also in terms of status and transnational situatedness.

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<sup>574</sup> Ibid., pp. 3, 6-7.

<sup>575</sup> Mohamed Adhikari, *Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and change in the expression of Coloured identity in white supremacist South Africa, 1910-1994* (D. Phil. thesis, University of Cape Town, July 2002), pp. 4, 243 and Ebrahim Rasool, "Unveiling the heart of fear," in Wilmot James, Daria Caliguire and Kerry Cullinan, *Now That We are Free* (Idasa: Cape Town, 1996), pp. 54-58 on pp. 55-56.

<sup>576</sup> Erasmus, *Re-imagining Coloured identities*, op. cit.

<sup>577</sup> See among others Melissa Steyn, "Whiteness Just Isn't What It Used To Be": *White Identity in a Changing South Africa* (State University of New York Press: Albany, 2001) and Z.B. du Toit, *Die Nuwe Toekoms: 'n Perspektief op die Afrikaner by die eeuwisseling* (J.P. van der Walt: Pretoria, 1999).

<sup>578</sup> See Erasmus, *Re-imagining Coloured identities*, op. cit., and Erasmus, *Coloured by History*, op. cit., and Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough*, op. cit., p. 178.

Muslims formed a majority among the small group of Indians in the Western Cape. For many Muslim Indians, part of a population living with the tensions between internal differences, a limited emotional bond with South Africa in the case of some<sup>579</sup> and many links to South Asia, Islam provided a potential transnational and unifying discursive space. In addition, it provided a framework for the re-appropriation of cultural legacies, or an inward turn to Sufism, sometimes with a socio-political dimension, and sometimes a turning away from the clamour of socio-political struggles to the mystical meanings of Islam. At the same time, in some cases, Islam became a way of de-emphasizing the Indian geographical links, purging them of Hindu links, reinforcing the links of Muslim Indians to South Africa and preventing them from being submerged by the non-Muslim majorities around them.<sup>580</sup>

Muslims also formed a marginal minority in the multi-ethnic white group, previously the main political basis of central government, and a marginal minority among multi-ethnic black people, now the main political basis of the central government. However, Indians and Coloureds formed the mainstay among Muslims and the major Muslim institutions in the province. Muslims thus constituted people often carrying multiple identities and occupying various positions in the prevailing social constellation, forming both a diverse population and a numerical minority amidst other forces.

### *Race and gender*

While many people disliked the system of racial classification before 1994, the same system has remained politically relevant since 1994. While black people were a majority in seven of SA's nine provinces, the heterogeneous Coloured population was the majority in the Western Cape province. In the 1996 census they constituted more than 2.1 million of the 3.96 million people or roughly 54% of the population in the province, with whites and blacks constituting almost 21% each, an unspecified group of 3% and 40 000 Indians forming just over 1%.<sup>581</sup>

According to the Census of 1996 in South Africa there were, depending on the table used, between 263 907 and 264 650 Muslims in the Western Cape, constituting a numerical minority nationally.<sup>582</sup> This statistic was contested by the IUC and by the MJC, which claimed that there were more than 600 000 Muslims in the province and 3.5% or 1.57 million Muslims in a population of 45 million, but they have been unable to provide authoritative data to support this claim.<sup>583</sup> The size of a minority group may be over-emphasized in societies where group politics play a role, but in this case the territorial

<sup>579</sup> Goolam Vahed, *Changing Islamic Traditions*, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>580</sup> Rehana Ebrahim-Valley, "Diversity in the imagined *Ummah*: the example of Indian Muslims in South Africa" in Abebe Zegeye, *Social Identities in the New South Africa: After Apartheid* vol. one (Kwela Books: Cape Town, 2001), pp. 269-300, especially pp. 284, 297.

<sup>581</sup> *Census in Brief: The People of South Africa Population Census, 1996* (Statistics SA: Pretoria, 1996), p. 8.

<sup>582</sup> *South African Census 96*, Table 1: Western Cape by Population group and gender for Muslim Faith (Statistics South Africa: Pretoria, 1996), pp. 13, 27 and 41.

<sup>583</sup> "Muslims in South Africa and the Crisis of Identity", *Ad-Da'wah*, February 2000, p. 2; "Political involvement of SA Muslims", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 2000, p. 1.

concentration and noticeable presence of Muslims in and around Cape Town may also have played a role in the over-estimation.<sup>584</sup>

Statistical surveys of the population in SA have contained many deficiencies over the years. Methodological flaws in collection and assessment may also have occurred after 1994, and the statistics are therefore seen as indicators of trends rather than final figures. However, even so, there are indications that an expansion of Muslims had occurred during the 1990s. At the same time, emigration, which also featured strongly among other minority groups in SA since 1994, also started affecting the size of the Muslim community. In Australia, for example, there was a whole small community of Muslims from the region with their own imam.<sup>585</sup>

Coloureds were 211 870, almost 87% or a majority of the Muslim group, but Muslim Coloureds constituted a minority in the province's majority group as well as a national minority. There were also 13 966 Indian males and 14 190 Indian females, in total adding up to less than 28 200 or 11%, a minority in the Muslim minority group. However, Muslims constituted about 80% or a majority of the 40 000 Indians in the Western Cape, which formed a part of the national minority of Indians. There were 490 white males and 497 white females, with whites constituting less than 0.4% of the Muslim population.<sup>586</sup>

The Muslims whose gender was indicated included 128 168 males and 135 776 females, a total of 263 944.<sup>587</sup> Some people did not indicate their gender and about 19 128 people, more than 7% of the Muslim population counted by the census, did not specify one of the racial identities. There were roughly 1.5% blacks in the whole group, with 2029 males and 1818 females, the only group in which the number of males was bigger than that of women.<sup>588</sup> This difference may be ascribed to the combined effect of the predominance of men among black Muslim refugees from elsewhere in Africa, the after-effect of the male-dominated black migrant labour system before 1994, and deliberate targeting of males for potential leadership positions in their community.<sup>589</sup>

The resemblances between Islam and black religions constructed as indigenous played a role in the conversion of earlier generations and also among socio-political activists searching for an authentic non-Western framework of expression. However, Islam had a marginal position among blacks in SA, reflected in the relatively low numbers and social status of black adherents. Among blacks, the dominant discourse was that Islam was a

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<sup>584</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Counting Muslims in South Africa" at <http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/religion/census.htm>.

<sup>585</sup> Interview with Farid Sayed, 9 February 2000.

<sup>586</sup> *South African Census 96*, Table 1: Western Cape by Population group and gender for Muslim Faith (Statistics South Africa: Pretoria, 1996), pp. 13, 27 and 41.

<sup>587</sup> For the clerics' views on the social dimensions of gender see chapter 7. For an article about Muslim homosexuals and lesbians in the Cape forming an advocacy group in 1998, the Al-Fitra Foundation, which aimed at the dominant clerical discourse, see Scott Kugle, "Queer Jihad: A View from South Africa", *ISIM Review*, No. 16 (Autumn 2005), pp. 14-15.

<sup>588</sup> Ibid.

<sup>589</sup> See chapter 2 in the published Ph.D. dissertation in social anthropology of Sindre Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations: Facets of Secularisation and Re-Islamization among contemporary Cape Muslims* (ISIM, Leiden: Amsterdam University Press, 2007).

foreign religion, often described as an Indian or Cape Malay religion, and those who accepted Islam were often viewed as sell-outs.<sup>590</sup>

The different socio-economic power relations between the different racial communities also played a role, with material deprivation a motivation among others in the conversion of old women and young people, and the prospect of protection by Muslim networks playing a role among some prisoners. Among blacks, for example, it was a widespread perception that Islamic knowledge was the preserve of Coloured and Indian Muslims.<sup>591</sup>

#### *Clerics and racial boundary-making*

Muslims constituted a racially diverse population. The non-racial interpretation of Islamic teachings by the MJC and IUC radio stations, as well as non-racial practices at the mosques, did promote acceptance of people and fellow-Muslims irrespective of race.<sup>592</sup> A number of clerics held anti-Western or anti-Zionist views, and sometimes opposition to the West also entailed anti-white views, although there were more than a thousand white converts to Islam in the Western Cape. Similarly, sometimes opposition to Zionism was a code for being anti-Jewish. In some cases these codes were combined. For example, during a mass meeting on Palestine at the Surrey Estate mosque, Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels, president of the MJC and probably more close to the ANC, accused Tony Leon, the Jewish leader of the DA opposition party, of "serving the Jews and the whites."<sup>593</sup>

No evidence was found of similar boundary-making in the public sphere with regard to the multi-ethnic black people in SA. However, Imam Tahir Vaalboom of the mosque in the black area of Langa was one of several black Muslims complaining that even Cape Muslims did not help their black fellow-Muslims the way they should. The Concerned Black Muslims on 10 March 2000 handed over a memorandum to the Office of the President in Pretoria lodging a complaint of racism against Indian Muslims, who they accused of resisting the political change since 1994, imposing cruel and illegal working conditions on black employees, and the canvassing of foreign funds for local projects on the pretext of black Muslim advancement.<sup>594</sup>

Other black Muslims focused on developing self-sufficiency rather than entitlement. In some cases, this approach also entailed criticism that Coloured, Indian and Malay Muslims were forming a separate group and that their assistance was intended to make

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<sup>590</sup> Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations*, op. cit., pp. 57, 80, 86, 95-97.

<sup>591</sup> Ibid.

<sup>592</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Race, Colour and Muslims," *Muslim Views*, April 1994, p. 4. For black Muslim references to experiences of discrimination, see *Muslim Views*, May 1994, p. 21.

<sup>593</sup> Direct broadcast, Voice of the Cape, 6 October 2000.

<sup>594</sup> "Township Muslims face struggle for survival," *Muslim Views*, August 1998, p. 8; "Racism and the Muslims", *Muslim Views*, April 2000, p. 32; Sh. Achmat Sedick, "No place for racism in Islam", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 2000, p. 1; "African vs Indian Muslims in race saga", *Saturday Argus*, 27-28 May 2000, p. 24; Mumisa, op. cit., p. 293.



black Muslims more dependent, not more self-reliant.<sup>595</sup> When black Muslims assembled in KwaZulu Natal in the late 1990s they were divided about establishing an exclusive formation for black African Muslims or pursuing a more inclusive approach, in which a black African focus would be only a temporary approach aimed at self-empowerment.<sup>596</sup>

Interaction between Indian and black African Muslims was limited to the business, academic and professional groups, rarely involving social interaction at a family level. Black Muslim migrants were viewed as potential business competitors. Indian Muslims did not significantly help them to integrate into the mainstream or develop links.<sup>597</sup> A similar situation pertained between Coloured Muslims and black African Muslims. Insults, exploitation, social distance and discrimination in favour of a Caucasoid in-group aesthetic ideal all played a role. Economic competition and social frictions dominated relations between the many Muslim artisans and semi-skilled workers and unskilled Xhosas in the building trade.<sup>598</sup>

Two black clerics had been adopted by non-black clerics and sent abroad for higher religious education. However, in general, black Muslims in the Western Cape were largely absent from crucial decision-making processes, as well as from the management of educational institutes, mosque and *madrasah* committees. Even in the meetings and marches of movements with a Black Consciousness background, for example Qibla, PAGAD and the IUC, black Muslims played a very marginal role.<sup>599</sup>

Some black African religions, revalorised in SA in the 1990s, share certain features with Islam, for example circumcision and burial rites. Syncretism between elements of constructed indigenous religions and Islam played an important role among many black Muslims.<sup>600</sup> A few clerics, like Rashied Omar, accepted that black Africans appropriated Islam and Christianity in their own way, which would result in an internal pluralism to Islam in SA. Other clerics were more critical of too much accommodation of the norms of these indigenous religions and the lack of complete adherence to Islamic norms.<sup>601</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> For an example of such a view, see two letters, namely "Not proper for 'Black Muslims' to lament", *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 18 and "Black Muslims sidelined", *Muslim Views*, March 1999, p. 27.

<sup>596</sup> "Alone against all odds", *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 34; Goolam Vahed, "Changing Islamic Traditions and emerging Identities in South Africa", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 20 no. 1 (2000), pp. 43-73 on p. 67; Michael Mumisa, "Islam and Proselytism in South Africa and Malawi", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 22 no. 2 (October 2002), pp. 275-298 on p. 294.

<sup>597</sup> Suleman Dangor, "Racism and Indian Muslims", *Muslim Views*, October 2000, p. 22; also see Fayrooz Bint Asads, "A betrayal of African tradition", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 1.

<sup>598</sup> Haron, "Islamic Culture", op. cit., pp. 22-26.

<sup>599</sup> Personal observation, PAGAD mass meeting, Cape Town, 12 February 2000 and Qibla march, Cape Town, 22 December 2000.

<sup>600</sup> Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations*, op. cit., chapter 2; Muhammad Haron, "Islamic Culture amongst the Nguni (Xhosa and Zulu) peoples", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 3 (1997), pp. 22-26; *Muslim Views*, July 1996, p. 10; Adam Ashworth, *Witchcraft, Violence, and Democracy in South Africa* (The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2005) and Heinrich Matthee, "Die skadu's van Soweto", *Die Burger*, 10 January 2006, p. 7.

<sup>601</sup> Lecture by imam Rashied Omar, Parliament of the World Religions, Cape Town, 2 December 1999; interviews with Sh. Riyadh Walls, Cravenby 30 November 2000 and with Imam Amin Festus, Masjidul Thaalith, Beacon Valley, Mitchells Plain, 22 November 2000.

The MJC leadership clearly rejected discrimination against black people and black Muslims in its public pronouncements, a position reinforced and to some extent structured by the dominant discourses in South Africa as well as black majority rule. However, by 2000, the president of the MJC, Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels, indicated that “Indian and Malay Muslims” had been distancing themselves from black Muslims, rather than the other way round. However, the secretary general of the MJC, Sh. Achmat Sedick, later acknowledged that during the first years after 1994 the MJC had been less successful in its work among black communities.<sup>602</sup>

Numerous discourses and practices among Muslim clerics relating to different groups among Muslims tended to promote unity, but also boundaries and exclusivity. The views and patterns of conduct among many Muslims from different racial groups, and among non-Muslims from these groups, produced counter-influences to a universalist interpretation of Islam and the local Muslim community. The clerics were partly unable to prevent the sacred order based on Islamic membership criteria being influenced by other identities that served to divide rather than reinforce a harmonious co-existence.

Among many black people, the perception dominated that Islamic knowledge was the preserve of Coloured and Indian Muslims. This partly reflected the views among many blacks in Southern Africa that Islam was essentially an Indian religion. Perceived Indian control of Islam in the South African context was linked to charges of exclusiveness, preference and discrimination.<sup>603</sup>

#### *Clerics and the Rainbow Nation discourse*

Clerics also had to negotiate the boundaries of a sacred order in a context of diverse and often bigger non-Muslim groups, where individual Muslims had several possible identities. The ANC’s Rainbow Nation discourse after 1994 revolved around a new inclusive order based on reconciliation and recognition of racial and religious diversity, exemplified by symbolic public performances of Nelson Mandela. This coincided with the period where the ANC, a movement constituted during a revolutionary struggle and one with a limited pool of both committed and skilled cadres, strengthened its hold on the various institutions and bureaucratic mechanisms of power. The discourse’s inclusive and mostly non-confrontational focus meant that only limited opposition could be mobilized to this power shift and that many power centres with the potential for resistance were co-opted or neutralized by the ANC using its majoritarian mandate.

There were at least three different strands of interpretation of the main idea of an inclusive Rainbow Nation. The first strand, and the main focus of the ANC and many of its Muslim supporters, was that under a majoritarian democracy, a program of transformation was necessary to rectify the imbalances of power and wealth in the past, albeit around the idea of reconciliation and building one nation for all.

<sup>602</sup> Nazlia Peer, “MJC appoints Shaikh Ismail Gqamane Acting President,” *Muslim Views*, January-February 2001, p. 3; telephone interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, 4 April 2003.

<sup>603</sup> Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations*, op. cit., chapter 2; Achmat Davids, “Music and Islam: an ethnomusicological view”, *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 32 no. 1 (1997), pp. 11-15 on p. 11; Mumisa, op. cit., p. 293.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process from 1996-1998, the result of party political negotiations, tried to focus on granting amnesty for all politically motivated crimes and to uncover the full truth about the end of white rule. A commissioner and the judge heading the amnesty committee were Muslim. However, as a community the TRC itself and the issues raised by it passed Muslims and clerics by. The Christianisation of the TRC process, in terms of participants and symbolism, contributed significantly to the Muslim response, according to Esack.<sup>604</sup>

Secondly, many leaders in the corporate business sector interpreted the Rainbow Nation discourse as also creating protection for individual rights, including property rights, in a neo-liberal capitalist order in South Africa, generally in tune with the global economic order and with limited redistribution of wealth. However, clerics across the spectrum were sceptical or critical of globalisation, to which the emphasis on a sacred order provided some counter. The MJC leadership stated that the forces of globalisation had the intention and ability to dominate all indigenous cultures, economics and political systems.<sup>605</sup>

Thirdly, some leaders of minority communities, including Muslims with links to the National Party, argued that the new order recognised communities and at least partly protected them by protecting the individual rights of members of the communities. The MJC leadership was very critical of the individual and secular focus of the new constitutional order, but also used the human rights and democratic framework of the political order to assert Muslim rights, interests and ideals.

MJC secretary general Achmat Sedick, for example, stated that it was possible to carry identities as a Muslim, South African and African without being a lesser Muslim. Muslims had to remain a balanced community, not isolating itself in their mosques, nor venting their anger in violent action against a democracy which would then look for more reliable allies in nation-building. With Allah at the centre of human beings, the most powerful identity of Muslims was to be at the centre of action for doing.<sup>606</sup>

The NP's project in the 1950s to the 1970s had contained elements of racial identity politics, but also a focus on peoples and their right to self-determination, and with a special status accorded to Muslims in certain periods. The proponents of the Rainbow Nation discourse de-emphasized and de-legitimised racial identity politics, which most Muslims supported. However, they also avoided a clear recognition of separate peoples with a right to self-determination or communities with distinctive rights. This approach denied such a symbolic base to the major potential opponents to a unitarian nation state, namely the Afrikaners and the Zulus, but also affected other peoples and communities.

The strongest symbolic counter-currents to the main ANC interpretation among Muslims were from the Islamist parties' promotion of an Islamic code in the public sphere, the

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<sup>604</sup> Esack, *Being*, op. cit., pp. 185-188 and lecture by imam Gasant Solomons at the Peninsula Technikon, 5 December 1999.

<sup>605</sup> "Muslims in South Africa and the Crisis of Identity", *Ad-Da'wah*, February 2000, p. 2.

<sup>606</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

Boorhaanol Islam group's emphasis on an exclusive or distinctive area for Muslims in the Bo-Kaap, and some of the ideas and practices of Qibla, the IUC and PAGAD. While there was only a very small group of clerics directly involved in these three projects, the basic approach of especially the first project enjoyed significant support among the MJC leadership and among many clerics interviewed.

### *Clerics and the African Renaissance discourse*

The African Renaissance discourse has been promoted by Thabo Mbeki since 1996. One possible consideration was to differentiate him from his predecessor and media icon Mandela. Another consideration was to produce mobilizing and legitimising symbols to unite important white and black sections while economic empowerment of a black elite and the creation of a substantial black middle class continued.<sup>607</sup>

The discourse envisaged a renewal of Africa.<sup>608</sup> The African Renaissance discourse allowed for at least two different emphases. One emphasis overlapped with that of the Rainbow Nation, recognizing and celebrating the contribution of all groups to a common African heritage that historically contained Arab, Berber, Western and Negroid elements and spaces. Another emphasized the political, economic and also cultural resurgence of Africa in the world, but with a close and more exclusivist notion that only blacks belonged in Africa.

The latter racialised interpretation was easily linked to Mbeki's racialised construct of a South Africa of a poor black nation and a rich white nation, and also coincided with Mbeki's politics of co-opting leftists and black ethnic opposition figures. It was however also accompanied by a less acknowledged space for non-black communities on their own terms, including the mostly non-black Muslims of the Western Cape.

The MJC leadership followed two approaches to the African Renaissance discourse, possibly due to a combination of different views about the issue in the MJC and political expediency. One approach was to link the position of Islam and Muslims with a racially-neutral and geographical interpretation of the discourse. Sh. Achmat Sedick, for example, emphasized the validity of numerous identities in one person, of simultaneously being Muslim, African and South African. He also acknowledged that it was difficult to achieve a Muslim identity due to the diverse ethnic, linguistic and cultural origins of Muslims,<sup>609</sup> unveiling moreover the dimension of construction, incompleteness and contestation also involved in Muslim identity.

Another approach by the MJC leadership was to emphasize the racial unity between black Muslims in Africa and black Muslims elsewhere, in line with Mbeki's own interpretation of the concept of an African Renaissance. The MJC sent a delegation to a meeting of the Union of Muslim Councils of Central, East and Southern Africa in Durban in November 1999, which discussed the role of Muslims in the African Renaissance, and

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<sup>607</sup> Gumede, op. cit., pp. 201, 223.

<sup>608</sup> Thabo Mbeki, *Africa – the Time Has Come* (Cape Town: Tafelberg & Mafube, 1998), p. 193.

<sup>609</sup> "Muslims in South Africa and the Crisis of Identity", *Ad-Da'wah*, February 2000, p. 2.

the creation of a United States of Africa as proposed by Libyan leader Muammar Gadafi.<sup>610</sup>

Sh. Abdullah Hamid Quick, an Afro-American cleric in charge of the MJC's outreach activities, played a role in this regard. For example, a very inclusive MJC function on the African Renaissance in 2000 included Afro-American, Afro-Brazilian and Afro-Caribbean martial arts and Muhammad's message to the Ethiopian people. It also incorporated the non-African and Indian element in the form of Malaysian-Indonesian martial arts. However, the audience, as at most MJC or even Muslim meetings in the Cape, included virtually no local black Muslims, underlining the disparity between the concept and the Coloured and Indian predominance in most Muslim organizations and activities in the province.<sup>611</sup>

In a similar vein, Qibla thinkers, incorporated themes from Pan Africanist and Black Consciousness thinking. Imam Abdullah Haron, a Pan Africanist Congress supporter and Black Consciousness leader Steve Biko were employed as symbols in this regard.<sup>612</sup> Imam Achmat Cassiem and his wife would refer to Azania, not South Africa, a name that emerged under colonial rule.<sup>613</sup> However, unlike the MJC, they distrusted the ANC in promoting an African Renaissance. *Al-Miftah*, the IUC newspaper, generally was dismissive of the ANC's pursuit of the project. During protests against the visit by British prime minister Tony Blair to South Africa, placards read "African Renaissance + Police Brutality", a reference to a hard-line law enforcement approach against PAGAD protesters. It also stated that SA was approaching a degeneration in public morality rather than a revival.<sup>614</sup>

A third approach was that of the pro-ANC imam Rashied Omar.<sup>615</sup> He used the African Renaissance discourse not only to link Muslims to the new order, but also to promote an internal reform of the Muslim community. He described Muslims as being focused too much on solidarity with Muslims in the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and elsewhere in the Muslim world, while being oblivious to Muslim suffering in sub-Saharan Africa. Muslims had to embrace their African heritage and identity with great pride and owe their allegiance to Africa first.

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<sup>610</sup> "The Union of Muslim Councils of Central East and Southern Africa", *Ad-Da'wah*, February 2000, p. 5.

<sup>611</sup> Personal attendance and Heinrich Matthee, "MJC to launch da'wah programme", *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 33.

<sup>612</sup> "Twenty-Seven Years since the killing of the Imam", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 4 and "Biko – The Forsaken hero of Azania", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 4. For a general background on Black Consciousness in SA, see Gail M. Gerhart, *Black Power in South Africa: The Evolution of an Ideology* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1978), where the earlier ambivalence and debates among Indians and Coloureds about their identification as black is described on pp. 278-281

<sup>613</sup> "Imam Haron Commemoration", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 13; video *Qibla book launch: Theme: "Unity"* (1992). See also Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 213; *Muslim Views*, October 1994, p. 1.

<sup>614</sup> Yussuf Nazeer, "Is South Africa undergoing a Renaissance...or a Degeneration?", *Al-Miftah*, August/September 1999, p. 5.

<sup>615</sup> Imam A. Rashied Omar, "Muslims and the African Renaissance", Eid al-Fitr Khutbah, 19 January 1999.

Omar also exhorted Muslims, living on a continent that was home to much that was Islamic, to challenge interpretations of Islam that were biased toward Arabic cultures in the Islamic world. African Islam needed to take up its rightful place alongside Arab, Turkish, Persian and Indian expressions of Islam.<sup>616</sup> While the African Renaissance as a construct was at least partly outside Islam, since there were many non-Islamic religions in Africa, he nonetheless made it a condition of renewal among South African Muslims.

Omar's separation of Arabic cultures and an "authentic African Islam", like the racialised interpretation of the discourse, contained the potential of recasting Arab Africans as non-African Arabs and privileging the mostly black populations of sub-Saharan Africa in a definition of Africans. Such a focus would also marginalize the position of Indian and white African Muslims and the indigenous Berber populations of North Africa.

Lastly, some clerics considered the possibility of a coming suppression of Muslims in South Africa comparable to Chechnya or Bosnia, saw the ANC and the atheist South African Communist Party (SACP) as at least potentially strongly anti-Islamic, and wanted Muslims to secure Islam and themselves. *Boorhaanol Islam* even advised Muslims to ensure their strong presence in the security forces, stating that Bosnian Muslims had left the defence of their country to other groups.<sup>617</sup>

Some clerics, like Shaikh Faik Gamieldien, a MJC member, thought that a commitment to a certain interpretation of the African Renaissance could achieve more security for Muslims as a minority. In contrast to Omar, he explicitly recognized the Berber and Arab forces in northern Africa as Muslim and advocated a linking of all African Muslims to prevent a Bosnian or Rwandan genocide. While Omar considered an African Renaissance a condition for Muslim renewal, Gamieldien said that a spiritual Muslim renaissance would automatically mean a return of Africa to the only time it ruled Europe, namely during the time of the Muslims' rule of Spain for 700 years.<sup>618</sup>

At other times this protectionist approach was implicitly or explicitly combined with an emphasis on the Indian roots of Muslims, whether Indian or Indonesian-Malaysian, also in contrast to black African identities.<sup>619</sup> However, clerics had to contend with the constraints of a dominant ANC, a centrist posture by the MJC and a general dominant discourse protected by the mainstream media and political institutions against expressing ideas that could be construed as anti-black identity politics. Thus, the public statements by clerics generally refrained from a clear formulation of views on this issue.

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<sup>616</sup> Imam A. Rashied Omar, "Muslims and the African Renaissance", Eid al-Fitr Khutbah, 19 January 1999.

<sup>617</sup> "Career choices", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 31 no. 3 (July 1996), pp. 2-3. Pres. Mugabe's statement that fundamentalism was a threat to the continent was also seen as an indicator of such a threat. See "Bosnia", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 30 no. 3 (1995), pp. 2-3 on p. 3 and interview with Imam Ishmail Davids, Bo-Kaap, 15 November 2000. This also explained the vehemence of responses to the planned Anti-Terrorism Bill in 2000, which was seen as aimed at Muslims. See "'Ulama, MRN call on govt to drop anti-terror bill", *Muslim Views*, September 2000, p. 3.

<sup>618</sup> "Islam and the African Renaissance", *Muslim Views*, November 1998, p. 15.

<sup>619</sup> Rashied Omar, "Black Muslims march against Muslim racism", *Muslim Views*, April 2000, p. 4.

The MJC and IUC leadership and Muslim media, whether for reasons of conviction or expediency, were willing to acknowledge and accommodate at least some elements of the African Renaissance discourse. Presumably, among the Muslims supporting the ANC in elections, there was at least acquiescence in the discourse.

Nevertheless, among Muslims in general, the strongest approach to the African Renaissance was one of scepticism about combining Muslim identities with the African Renaissance project. Many Muslims felt that the idea of an African Renaissance was a form of black identity politics that had little relevance to them and remained disinclined and averse to the discussion. This tendency was possibly reinforced by the often racialised political competition for power, status and resources in the Western Cape after 1994.<sup>620</sup> It also fuelled the exclusionary and differentiating interpretations of the boundaries of an Islamic sacred order.

### *Language and culture*

Afrikaans was the mother tongue of 14.4% of the population in 1996, including about 82.1% of Coloureds and only 1.5% of Indians. Most Coloureds and most Coloured Muslims in the region were Afrikaans-speaking.<sup>621</sup> According to Ferguson<sup>622</sup>, one can distinguish between the usage of a language for communication with and within political, cultural and economic institutions, and as a vernacular, between the high and low functions of a language. In this sense, English was usually used for the high functions and it dominated as the language of Islamic culture. In the province, isiXhosa was the main language among black Muslims, with very few if any mother-tongue speakers of isiNdebele, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, SiSwati, Setswana, Tshivenda and Xitsonga.

Afrikaans was used by many Muslims in private and intimate settings, with English preferred in public settings, but it was not completely absent in the Muslim public domain. On the state-controlled SA Broadcasting Corporation's Afrikaans radio service, *Radio Sonder Grense* (Radio Without Borders), a short Islamic message was broadcast in Afrikaans on Friday mornings, with a slightly longer program once a week. *Ad-Da'wah* occasionally published a short article in Afrikaans, and MJC president Nazeem Mohamed and his successor Ebrahim Gabriels also used Afrikaans at public gatherings.<sup>623</sup>

However, overall, although Afrikaans was the mother tongue of most Muslims in the province, Afrikaans played a very subordinate role as the language of Islamic culture or

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<sup>620</sup> Imam A. Rashied Omar, "Muslims and the African Renaissance", Eid al-Fitr Khutbah, 19 January 1999. See also A. Rashied Omar, "Heritage Day Khutbah" at <http://www.islam.org.za/Claremont/heritage.htm> on 24 September 1999 and chapter six.

<sup>621</sup> Census in brief, table 2.9 Home language by population group (numbers) at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/census96/HTML.CIB/Population/29.htm>.

<sup>622</sup> C. Ferguson, "Diglossia" in P.P. Giglioli (ed.) *Language and social context* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), pp. 232-251.

<sup>623</sup> Sh. Achmat Sedick, "Die nuwe 'mode' in die gemeenskap", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 1997, p. 3. See also Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations*, op. cit., p. 297. Most of the ten clerics interviewed used English or a mixture of English and Afrikaans.

in Muslim community institutions. It was virtually unheard on the IUC's Radio 786, had a very limited role on the MJC's Voice of the Cape radio station, and played a strongly subordinate role in the proceedings and publications of the MJC, the IUC, Muslim Assembly, PAGAD and the Boorhaanol Islam movement, as well as in *Muslim Views*.

In general a preference for the English language has been a defining feature for Coloured and Indian Muslim elites for centuries. Afrikaners, including factions of the Afrikaner elite, conducted a political and cultural struggle to first promote Dutch and then Afrikaans as a public language. However, this struggle was largely ignored by the predominantly Afrikaans-speaking Coloureds, their mainly English-speaking elites and the largely English-speaking Indians. In the Cape Metropole, an important factor in this regard was the dominance of English as a language of commerce and social status and mobility in the cosmopolitan and English-dominated economic world of greater Cape Town since at least the time of British colonial rule after 1806.<sup>624</sup>

This position also had historical political dimensions. Most of the Afrikaans-speaking Coloured population in the Western Cape, as well as Dr. Abdullah Abdurahman, the Muslim leader of the Coloureds for decades, had been very loyal to the British Crown during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902. By the 1930s this still was the case for Coloureds in general and Coloured Muslims too.<sup>625</sup> During Afrikaner rule after 1948 resistance to the policies of racial separate development became linked to resistance to Afrikaans. After 1994, the dominant discourses in Coloured and Muslim identity politics and the interests of the elite simply did not support a struggle for Afrikaans in the public domain. In general, the clerics reinforced this trend.

However, many clerics did reinforce the strong symbolic role of Arabic and the Arab world in the Islamic sphere of the Western Cape. Arabic classes were held at the Islamic schools, the Quran was often read in Arabic at Friday sermons, and both Quranic and everyday expressions in Arabic were used in conversation, sermons and writings.<sup>626</sup> This was not just a case of boundary-making but also a transmission of tradition. Some Arabic phrases became part of everyday usage, but only stemmed from the period after 1974.<sup>627</sup> The position of Arabic was supported by Arabic study circles and workshops and the inclusion of Arabic in the state school curriculum. Radio 786 promoted both Arabic and Urdu.<sup>628</sup>

Both the IUC and the MJC leadership tended to view the Middle East as the symbolic centre of the Islamic world. The largest single group of clerics in the MJC had been educated in Arabian institutions of higher religious education, *Ad-Da'wah* planned to

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<sup>624</sup> Chapter 3 and Steyn, *Tuiste*, op. cit., pp. 270-271.

<sup>625</sup> Ibid.

<sup>626</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1994, p. 16; *Muslim Views*, December 1994, p. 3; *Muslim Views*, November 1995, pp. 5, 12; *Muslim Views*, November 1996, p. 16; *Muslim Views*, October 1998 p. 3; *Muslim Views*, February 1999, p. 9.

<sup>627</sup> *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 7.

<sup>628</sup> See program schedules of Radio 786, 1995-1997.



have an Arabic page, containing news and information on the Arab countries,<sup>629</sup> and the reporting in *Al-Miftah* also privileged that part of the Islamic world. Proficiency in Arabic acquired a status in the community, while those clerics who studied in the Arab world were accorded the title *shaykh* and often received most deference.<sup>630</sup> This situation also had political consequences, with moral and sometimes financial support of various causes in the Arab world by the MJC, as well as some financial support by the Saudi government to the MJC.

The official views of the MJC and the IUC were not to distinguish between Cape Malay or Indian Muslims. Some clerics attributed tensions between some Indian and some Malay Muslims to the Zionists and other enemies of Islam.<sup>631</sup> A few Muslim intellectuals also criticized the emphasis on a distinctive Cape Malay culture or the Cape Malay slavery background, and the dominant discourse of both the MJC and IUC radio stations was one of opposition to the ethnicisation of Muslims.<sup>632</sup>

However, the radio stations Voice of the Cape (MJC) and Radio 786 (IUC) were sometimes characterized as Malay or Indian-controlled stations respectively.<sup>633</sup> Below the surface, many clerics did contribute to such boundary-making. Articles in *Ad-Da'wah* directly referred to the impact of the distinctions. A clear re-ethnicisation of Muslim identity, or a combination of Muslim and ethnic identities occurred during the Tricentenary celebrations of Islam in SA in 1994, held with the support of the MJC.<sup>634</sup>

A Forum for Malay Culture existed outside the MJC. A woman, Tasneem Kalam, her adviser and later African Muslim Party local candidate Dawood Zwavel, and two leaders of traditional Cape Muslim bands played a leading role in the Forum. According to Kalam, the pioneers of Islam in SA were Malay, the Bo-Kaap area had to be reclaimed for Malay Muslims, and the Malay culture was undermined by the Arabic influences from clerics that had studied abroad and wanted a more puritanical Islam.<sup>635</sup> While the Forum claimed to enjoy the support of thousands, a march in 2000 to Parliament to protest against Law and Order Minister Steve Tshwete's remarks about Islamic fundamentalism was attended by less than 50 people.<sup>636</sup>

<sup>629</sup> "Ad-Da'wah relaunched", *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1996, p. 1.

<sup>630</sup> *Muslim Views*, November 1995, p. 12 and interview with Dr. Yusuf da Costa, Masjidul Quds mosque, Gatesville, 1 March 2000.

<sup>631</sup> Interview with Maulana Ebrahim Khan, Coowatool Islam mosque, Bo-Kaap at his home in Rylands, 22 November 2000 and interview with Moulana Abdurrahman Segers, Masjidul Thaalith, Beacon Valley, Mitchells Plain, 22 November 2000.

<sup>632</sup> *Muslim Views*, March 1995, p. 10.

<sup>633</sup> Interview with Ahmed Amien, station manager of Radio 786, 1 April 2000.

<sup>634</sup> "Muslims in South Africa", *Ad-Da'wah* June 1998, pp. 6-7; M.G. Hartley, "Malay have a proud culture," *Muslim Views*, January 1999, p. 26. Also see chapter 7.

<sup>635</sup> Interview with Tasneem Kalam, Bo-Kaap, 4 October 2000; interview with Kalam on Voice of the Cape, 13 September 2000; interview with Dawood Zwavel, 4 October 2000 and telephone interview on 13 November 2000; "'Malay' stirs Bo-Kaap tempers", *Saturday Argus*, 4/5 September 1999, p. 20.

<sup>636</sup> Personal attendance, Cape Town, 16 September 2000.

In spite of some inter-marriage between the Coloured, Malay and Indian Muslims, the ethnic distinctions also played a role at local level and sometimes resulted in frictions.<sup>637</sup> For example, at the Al Falaagh mosque in Bellville South in 2000, the mosque committee was dominated by Indians, and the imam of predominantly Indian descent. Some people who identified themselves as Cape Malays felt that they were not represented and pushed for two representatives on the mosque committee. According to the imam, the Indians gave everything, but other Muslims in the congregation said that the Indians wanted to control everything.<sup>638</sup> In contrast, Kensington, Goodwood, Facreton and Wynberg mosques were accused of not wanting Indians on their mosque committees, but accepting the financial contributions of Indians.<sup>639</sup>

Thus, boundary-making occurred. At the same time, the recasting of Cape Malay ethnicity, for example, mostly remained a minor activity. In addition, the historical capacity of the Cape Malay identity to encompass people from different backgrounds and its local roots were emphasized as part of the identity, and contrasted with supposedly more exclusive, less localised Arabic clerical discourses.<sup>640</sup>

### Age and education

The Muslim population included a substantial youth component. Of the 265 056 Muslims whose age was indicated, 88 571 or more than 33% were between 0 and 14 years, with 25 037 in the age group 15-19. This meant that 113 608 or more than 40% of the group was below 20. There were 25 675 in the group 20-24 and 23 292 in the age group 25-29, meaning more than 15% of the group. There were 21 813 Muslims in the age group 30-34, 18 927 Muslims in the age group 35-39, and 34 529 Muslims in the age group 40-49.<sup>641</sup>

The strong demographic position of the youth presented a challenge to the clerics, who had to find ways to inculcate Islamic principles among the youth amidst a predominantly non-Muslim environment and a global consumerist youth culture appropriated in various local ways.<sup>642</sup> As described above, the level of skills and literacy among many Muslims was still low in the late 1990s, and the level of Islamic knowledge uneven.<sup>643</sup> Different Muslim voices formed part of the Islamic sphere and often did not fit in with the main

<sup>637</sup> "Categorising Muslims," *Muslim Views*, February 1999, p. 18 and Suleman Dangor, "Racism and Indian Muslims," *Muslim Views*, October 2000, p. 22.

<sup>638</sup> Interview with Maulana Ahmed Tahier at the mosque, 15 November 2000.

<sup>639</sup> Mohamed Ahmed, "Let's revisit Indian racism," *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 18.

<sup>640</sup> Interview with Tasneem Kalam, Bo-Kaap, 4 October 2000; interview with imam Ishmail Davids, Bo-Kaap, 15 November 2000; Andrew Blank and Gary Minkley, "Genealogies of Space and Identity in Cape Town", *Kronos* no. 25 (1998/1999), pp. 4-16 and Robert C.H. Shell, "Islam in southern Africa, 1652-1998" in Nehemia Levtzion and Randall L. Pouwels (eds.), *The History of Islam in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), pp. 327-348.

<sup>641</sup> *South African Census 96*, Table 5: Western Cape by Age for Muslim Faith (Statistics South Africa: Pretoria, 1996), pp. 13, 27, and 41.

<sup>642</sup> "Youth at risk of losing Islamic identity", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1999, p. 10.

<sup>643</sup> "MJC releases shocking statistics," *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1997, pp. 1-2 on p. 1. See also Sindre Bangstad, *Islamisation, Gender & the Social Structuring of Memory in a Cape Muslim Community: A Report on Preliminary Findings*, seminar paper presented at the University of Stellenbosch, 23 August 2000, p. 10.

discourses of the MJC and the clerics in general. As stated by Bangstad, several people among black converts, working-class polygenous couples, prisoners and HIV/AIDS sufferers were among such Muslim voices.<sup>644</sup> However, also among higher-status Muslim professionals and academics secularisation processes had emerged from within the Muslim population.

The clerics tried to counter secularisation among Muslims by transmitting their interpretations of Islam. Already in 1991, imam Achmad Cassiem had stated that “The first right of an Islamic child is to grow up in an Islamic environment. That has to be ensured.”<sup>645</sup> MJC president Ebrahim Daniels and Boorhaanol Islam identified the preparation of the Muslim youth as carriers of Islam as the main challenge to Muslims. Teaching the ability to read the Quran in Arabic, the fundamental beliefs of Islam, and the basic rules relating to the pillars of Islam formed the core of most such curricula.<sup>646</sup>

The *madrasah* or religious school of higher study could take four basic forms. Firstly, an imam could visit and give personal classes, but this option was relatively expensive. Secondly, a house could serve as a *madrasah*, but the curriculum was in such a case not as transferable or comparable. Thirdly, a *madrasah* could be linked to an institution like the Muslim Assembly, or fourthly, a *madrasah* could be officially linked to a mosque, with an imam designing or influencing the curriculum. By 2000, an afternoon *madrasah* was available at 96 of the 124 mosques, sometimes linked to the mosque and sometimes not.<sup>647</sup>

The number of Gafith schools teaching the memorization of the Quran doubled between 1995 and 1997. About 34 Muslim preschool facilities existed in 1994, and 16 were established after 1994.<sup>648</sup> Clerics played a role in this expansion of educational infrastructure. However, they were not the sole actors in this regard. Parents and other organizations also played a role.<sup>649</sup> The Muslim Assembly (MA), who was founded and led by mainly Indian people in the professions, created a religious school curriculum and promoted this among the religious schools.<sup>650</sup> On the issue of education, there were cases of cooperation between various actors, as well as competition, but they resulted in a notable expansion of educational infrastructure.

Muslim attendance at former model C white schools increased, with most children from middle class and lower middle class families. This meant greater interaction with non-

<sup>644</sup> See Bangstad, *Global Flows*, op. cit., also pp. 231-232.

<sup>645</sup> Achmad Cassiem, "Lecture on Interim Government," videotape 1991.

<sup>646</sup> "Face to Face in conversation with Shaykh Ebrahim Daniels", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 35 no. 1 (January 2000), pp. 26-28 on p. 27; "The Muslim political landscape in SA", *Muslim Views*, May 1999, p. 4; Suleman Dangor, "The Struggle Intensifies", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 4 (November 1997), pp. 2-3; "The Madrasah – 'The cane is the only educational aid'", *Muslim Views*, October 1996, p. 20.

<sup>647</sup> Interviews with Farid Sayed, 28 January 2000 and Maulana Abdurrahman Segers, Masjidul Thaalith, Beacon Valley, Mitchells Plain, 22 November 2000.

<sup>648</sup> A. Fataar, "Muslim schooling patterns in the new South Africa", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 24 no. 7 (August 1998), p. 10; *Taraweeg Survey 1997*, p. 2 and *Taraweeg Survey 1998/1999*, pp. 77-90.

<sup>649</sup> "Islamic Educational Services," *Ad-Da'wah*, April 2000, p. 5.

<sup>650</sup> Speech by Dr. Adam Omar, president of the Muslim Assembly, at the Muslim Assembly's Annual General Meeting, 12 November 2000.

Muslim pupils. An undated ruling issued by the MJC after 1994 tried to influence the conduct of young Muslims in such a mostly non-Muslim environment. It discouraged the idea of matric school dances, referring to the transgression of certain Islamic prescriptions during school dance balls, for example music with elements of sexual provocation, free mixing of the sexes, a dress code not characterized by modesty and propriety, and the availability of alcohol. The ruling linked its guideline with South Africa's socio-economic problems, Aids, abortion, rape and low moral values.<sup>651</sup>

While there were only two Muslim private schools before 1994, three new ones were established after 1994. There also was a rise in Muslim community schools on the Cape Flats in largely impoverished working-class communities. The MJC supported exclusive secondary schools for Muslims as a way to preserve what it called Muslim culture.<sup>652</sup>

This expansion mirrored a similar development of social and spiritual enclaves among Muslims in KwaZulu Natal province. It did not follow a set pattern in the Western Cape, occurring among both richer and more impoverished Muslim communities, including both those close to the Cape Metropole and settlements further away. However, in general the clerics played an active though not exclusive role in this development.<sup>653</sup>

#### *Uneven skills and Islamic knowledge*

The Muslim population also included a substantial group of adults with limited formal education. Of the only 236 336 Muslims whose educational particulars were provided, 20 491 had no schooling, 51 802 had schooling but did not finish primary school, and 21 845 had a primary school certificate. The biggest group, 92 770, had a secondary school education but no matriculation certificate, while 28 831 had a matriculation certificate and 11 786 had a tertiary education.<sup>654</sup>

If one subtracted the numbers of the pre-school and schoolgoing age group under 20 from the total group numbers, more than 150 000 Muslims remained. If one allowed for the most favourable circumstances, namely that none in the 25 037 people in the group aged 14-19 had a matriculation certificate, subtracted that number from 92 770, the group with a secondary education but no matriculation certificate, and assumed that all other Muslims had indeed completed their primary school, this meant that of the remainder more than 67 000 or about 34% had no matriculation certificate, 28 831 or about than 29% had a matriculation certificate, and 11 786 or almost 8% had a tertiary education.

Thus, a majority of the Muslim population had limited formal skills with which to compete in a knowledge-intensive, technologically-driven economy. Still, a component among Muslims did have the formal skills to participate in a knowledge economy, and

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<sup>651</sup> Sh. Achmat Sedick, "Matric Ball Function."

<sup>652</sup> "The Muslim political landscape in SA", *Muslim Views* May 1999, p. 4. See also "Muslim High Schools", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 33 no. 4 (November 1998), pp. 42-45.

<sup>653</sup> Dr. Shuaib Manjra, "Muslim crisis of identity in post-apartheid South Africa", lecture, Cape Technikon, 4 December 1999.

<sup>654</sup> *South African Census 96*, Table 3: Western Cape by highest educational level for Muslim Faith (Statistics South Africa: Pretoria, 1996), pp. 13, 27, 41, 55, 69 and 83.

the educational statistics did not necessarily reflect the technical and trade expertise among many Muslims in some sectors. For example, Muslims were well-represented among the artisans, the textile and clothing industry, and small and medium-sized traders. Muslims were underrepresented in agriculture in the rural parts of the Western Cape, in mining in the northern provinces and in the police and the defence force.<sup>655</sup>

The limited formal educational qualifications among many Muslims coincided with the uneven levels of Islamic literacy among Muslims identified by Muslim clerics and organizations. According to Moutie Saban, head of the MJC's Social Welfare Department, a large percentage of the people who approached the MJC had little Islamic knowledge. The Muslim Assembly and various clerics interviewed also acknowledged a huge Islamic knowledge gap in the community, especially among some sections of the working class.<sup>656</sup>

Disparities in education and income reinforced intra-Muslim differences and potential hierarchies. Going on *hajj*, the pilgrimage to Mecca, for example, increased the social status of people and in this way reinforced the status of those who could afford it or find a sponsor. The level of education of many Muslims did not enable them to challenge the historical and often knowledge-based status of clerics. However, Islamic knowledge and interpretation formed an arena of competition between various factions among the clerics. This also created an opportunity for those actors who could credibly claim knowledge of Islam while disputing the authority of some clerics.

### **Socio-economic differences and social bonding**

Overall, the Muslim community included a substantial group with low or no income. Of the Muslims in the Western Cape, 143 039 had no income while more than 9%, 25 034, did not specify their income. The high percentage of people that did not specify their income possibly signalled distrust in or an unwillingness to cooperate with the tax collection system. Of the remaining 121 611 Muslims, 31 872 or more than 25% of employed Muslims had an income of R1000 or less per month, at the time below the poverty line in SA. More than 33% of this group of employed Muslims, 42 416, had a monthly income between R1000 and R2500, living just below or just above the poverty line in SA. Roughly 3% of the Muslims, namely 3 622, had a monthly income between R6000 and R30 000, allowing for a middle class and upper middle class lifestyle.<sup>657</sup>

According to these statistics, and taking into account the statistics for age groups, large components of the adult community did not generate income, lived under the poverty

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<sup>655</sup> "Career choices", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 31 no. 3 (July 1996), pp. 2-3.

<sup>656</sup> "MJC releases shocking statistics", *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1997, pp. 1-2 on p. 1; speech by dr. Adam Omar, president of the Muslim Assembly, at the group's annual general meeting on 12 November 2000; "Islamic culture", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 2 (April 1997), pp. 26-33 on p. 31; interviews with Imam Ishmail Davids, Bo-Kaap, 15 November 2000; Dr. Yusuf da Costa, Masjidul Quds mosque, 1 March 2000; Sh. Riyadh Walls, 30 November 2000; Maulana Abdurahman Segers, 22 November 2000; Moosa Vallie, 18 October 2000.

<sup>657</sup> *South African Census 96*, Table 2: Western Cape by Individual Income (Monthly) for Muslim Faith (Statistics South Africa: Pretoria, 1996), pp. 13, 27 and 41.

line, or lived just above it. This situation created the incentive for activities in the informal economy. The statistics probably did not accurately convey the extent of the informal economy, which included home shops, various services and other legal activities that went untaxed.<sup>658</sup>

The Muslim population showed wide socio-economic disparities and divisions, and this presented Muslim clerics with several problems. The limited economic resources of many Muslims affected their ability to support the prayer leaders or imams at mosques. On the one hand, it forced many congregations to become more self-reliant at a local level, since the overarching clerical organizations did not have sufficient resources. On the other hand, it created some dependency on richer donors, including foreign Muslim states and charities, as well as mostly Indian Muslims in the northern provinces of SA. Small or impoverished Muslim communities were unable to expand the Islamic infrastructure and knowledge to the degree necessary. In addition, Muslim community and political groups could raise limited funds from supporters and were vulnerable to pressure on the financial front.

However, the disparities also influenced the authority of the clerics with their mostly strict Islamic frameworks over impoverished and poor Muslims with uneven Islamic knowledge in informal settlements and townships on the Cape Flats. The role of Muslim clerics in promoting social bonding and solidarity among Muslims was apparent in two ways. The first was their contribution to social welfare activities among Muslims. Social solidarity with fellow-Muslims was an important theme in mainstream interpretations of Islam, but limited resources did have an impact on its extent.

Various clerics were very involved in welfare work among Muslims, but often in cooperation with welfare organizations. The MJC had its own welfare department. The Mustadafin Foundation, which had close links with the IUC and promoted self-reliance, supported 15 educare facilities, vocational training and a feeding scheme.<sup>659</sup> The Islamic Social Welfare Association (ISWA) provided revert classes and social work services, networking with the Western Cape Social Services and Development Department.<sup>660</sup>

Several clerics and clerical bodies participated in welfare activities, but there were also other important actors in this sphere. In some cases, clerics and clerical bodies cooperated with state welfare organizations and sometimes took over functions previously performed by the state. In 1999/2000 SANZAF coordinated assistance to needy families on behalf of

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<sup>658</sup> "SANZAF on Fitrah drive", *Muslim Views*, December 1998, p. 5; "Report back on Sanzaf's Ramadaan programme," *Muslim Views*, February 2000, p. 8; "South African National Zakah Fund, Western Cape Region, Ramadhan Appeal", and "Our ramadhan plight", *Muslim Views*, November 2000, pp. 15, 16. See also the comments on the clerics' concern about family life in Sindre Bangstad, "Humanizing Muslims through Visual Media": interview with Akiedah Mohamed, *ISIM Review*, No. 17 (Spring 2006), pp. 54-55, and chapter 5.

<sup>659</sup> Fayrooz Asad, "Mustadafin Foundation: 'Servant of the communities'," *Muslim Views*, November 1998, p. 6.

<sup>660</sup> "ISWA's Annual Rainbow Children's Day – Changing Tears to smiles!", *Muslim Views*, October 1996, p. 20. "Community Organisation Profile," *Muslim Views*, November 1996, p. 10 and Yazeed Kamaldien, "ISWA's community programme," *Muslim Views*, March 1999, p. 4.

55 mosques in the Cape.<sup>661</sup> Sometimes, clerics also fulfilled a leading role in broader projects. For example, Foodworld Stores and *Muslim Views* started to distribute clothes donated by the community to poor black and Coloured areas in 1998, a project coordinated by Imam Abdul Wahab Hamdulay of the Husami mosque in the predominantly Indian area of Cravenby.<sup>662</sup>

The Hospital Welfare and Muslim Educational Movement (HWMEM), in cooperation with the MJC, supervised the halaal kitchens at 13 major hospitals in the Peninsula by 1998.<sup>663</sup> Due to cutbacks in subsidies to the Department of Health and declining services and facilities, greater participation by the HWMEM became necessary.<sup>664</sup> The imam of the HWMEM, Imam Bayanudien Saban, the head of the MJC welfare department, was one of four Muslims recognized by the Western Cape Department of Health as official registrars of deaths who may issue death certificates.<sup>665</sup>

The second way in which clerics contributed to social bonding was the emphasis in their discourses, if not their practices, on group unity. The clerics all transmitted discourses emphasizing the value of unity, with reference to Islam and the concept of the *ummah*, but naturally even more relevant because of the minority status of Muslims and the considerable cultural, racial and socio-economic differences. The MJC stated its mission as a twofold commitment “to the preservation and strengthening of Islam in all its dimensions”, and to “the ideal of unity amongst all Muslims – especially those who comprise the religious leadership of the community.”<sup>666</sup> The IUC even incorporated the term into its name.

Unity was an important theme in Muslim discourses, but Muslim organisations did not succeed in effecting meaningful organizational or discursive unity among the diverse population of Muslims. However, it was a significant theme in the contestation for authority between these two actors and the project of each to establish itself as the main representative of the Muslim community. In addition, the MJC tried to promote the formation of Muslims as a community and a distinctive economic and political actor in the constitutional order, an actor that would have served as its main power base.<sup>667</sup> It also obtained about 55% of income generated by halaal certificates, while about 30% went to the Halaal Trust apparatus.<sup>668</sup>

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<sup>661</sup> “SANZAF on Fitrah drive,” *Muslim Views*, December 1998, p. 5, “Report back on Sanzaf’s Ramadaan programme,” *Muslim Views*, February 2000, p. 8. and “South African National Zakah Fund, Western Cape Region, Ramadhan Appeal,” and “Our ramadhan plight,” *Muslim Views*, November 2000, pp. 15, 16.

<sup>662</sup> “Foodworld, Muslim Views clothes thousands in upliftment project,” *Muslim Views*, December 1998, p. 4.

<sup>663</sup> “Halaal facilities in hospitals,” *Ad-Da’wah*, August 1998, p. 2.

<sup>664</sup> “HWMEM active in halaal kitchen,” *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 18 and “Halaal facilities in hospitals,” *Ad-Da’wah*, August 1998, p. 2.

<sup>665</sup> “Ramadaan 1421 Supplement,” *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 23.

<sup>666</sup> *The Muslim Judicial Council* (undated pamphlet).

<sup>667</sup> See chapter 8.

<sup>668</sup> Interview with Yagyah Adams, Athlone, 3 March 2000. For a general background, see “The MJC Halaal Trust – A Review”, *Ad-Da’wah*, January 1998, p. 2 and “Halaal Trust”, *Ad-Da’wah*, May 1998, p. 4.

## Geographical clustering

The Cape Metropole, the area where more than 90% of Muslims in the Western Cape lived, was a polyethnic, polylingual and polycentric city.<sup>669</sup> Muslims lived amidst its socio-economic and ethnic polarization, often in parallel life-worlds, but also moved between the different zones of the metropole for work and entertainment purposes.

However, a clustering of Coloured and Indian Muslims was evident in many areas that had previously been proclaimed Coloured or Indian group areas. The abolition in 1991 of the Group Areas Act that enforced group separatism had not removed such clustering. The clustering provided a base for a specifically Muslim community life in a number of areas, with neighbours often knowing each other and interacting socially.<sup>670</sup>

The sense of community among Muslims was in many ways reinforced by their geographical distribution. According to the 1996 census, there were 44 areas with Muslim communities. The areas in the Cape Metropole with most Muslims were in sequence, Manenberg (15 839, more than 90% Coloured), Bonteheuwel (12 393 Muslims, more than 90% Coloured), Tafelsig (11 406 Muslims, more than 95% Coloured), Lenteguur (10 996, more than 93% Coloured), Grassy Park (5252, more than 80% Coloured), Beacon Valley (7635 Muslims, more than 90% Coloured) and Portlands (6276, more than 90% Coloured).

The first seven areas with most Muslims were all on the Cape Flats away from the Cape Metropole, reflecting the direct impact on Muslims of social engineering and population removals aimed at establishing more racially-homogeneous residential areas during white rule. Muslims in these areas had to re-establish the structures of mosques and schools away from the historical core of first mosques and shrines.

The other main areas of Muslims were Woodstock (6258 Muslims, less than 70% Coloured), Lansdowne (6209, less than 80% Coloured, but with more than 8% unspecified), Woodlands (5653, more than 90% Coloured), Surrey (5512, less than 70% Coloured but more than 25% unspecified), Gatesville (5252, almost 75% Indian), Eastridge (5157, more than 95% of them Coloured), Delft (5119, more than 90% Coloured), Heideveld (5035, more than 98% Coloured), Belhar (4978, more than 72% Coloured but 12% unspecified), Rocklands (4714, more than 90% Coloured), Rylands (4581, just under 80% Indian and more than 10% unspecified), Kensington (4239, more than 86% Coloured), Schotsekloof (4155, more than 85% Coloured and more than 12% unspecified), Wynberg (3994, less than 70% Coloured but more than 20% unspecified) and Salt River (3988, less than 80% Coloured but more than 10% unspecified).

Only two of the top 22 areas were predominantly Indian, namely Gatesville and Rylands, which were situated adjacent to each other and contained many important institutions,

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<sup>669</sup> See R.D. Grillo, "Plural cities in comparative perspective", *Ethnic and Racial Studies* vol. 23 no. 6 (November 2000), pp. 957-981 on pp. 970-974.

<sup>670</sup> Akeela Gaibie-Dawood, "Interview with Sheikh Sadullah Khan," *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 34 no. 2 (March 1999), pp. 46-49 on p. 47.



including the Gatesville mosque and library, and ICOSA, Radio 786, Muslim Views and the PAGAD main office. Cravenby (2220, more than 97% Indian), Pelican Park (2679, more than 79% Indian) and Penlyn Estate (2573, more than 45% Indian) were other areas with high concentrations of Indian Muslims.

The largest concentration of Muslims outside the Cape metropole was in Strand (4240, more than 80% Coloured and more than 7% unspecified). Other areas included Macassar, near the shrine of Shaykh Yusuf (1118 Muslims, more than 85% Coloured), Worcester (2075 Muslims, 87% Coloured) and, Paarl (2158, more than 85% Coloured). These areas formed both the geographical and the political periphery of the Muslim population.

The ten biggest concentrations of white Muslims were in predominantly Coloured or very mixed areas, except for the predominantly white upper-class suburb of Constantia (29). Salt River (34), Woodstock (48), Schotschekloof (50) and Lansdowne (51) were the largest concentrations. Most white Muslims lived in predominantly Coloured areas and many were married to Indian or Coloured Muslims.

Similarly, most of the ten biggest concentrations of black Muslims were in predominantly Coloured areas, except for the Muslim population of the predominantly black Weltevreden-Heinz and Langa areas. Less than 14%, 512 of the 3844, actually resided in predominantly black townships. The three largest concentrations of black Muslims and the only places where there were more than 100 black Muslims were in Woodstock (240), Manenberg (233) and Lansdowne (166), predominantly Coloured areas. The same pattern repeated itself in the Boland towns of Stellenbosch and Paarl, where most black Muslims live in the predominantly Coloured areas, which often had better conditions than black townships.

On 26 November 2000, a celebration was held in District Six as 1763 tenant claims found valid in terms of Act 22 of 1994 were finalised. If Muslim names are used as a provisional indicator, Muslims formed a major group of more than 1500 or 62% among the more than 2400 claimants.<sup>671</sup> Muslim media often depicted the forced removal as a social disaster for Muslims. Others, like MJC secretary general Ahmad Sedick, stated that due to some crime and social ills District Six was not necessarily a place to be idealized, but that the removal had meant leaving behind mosques and suffering the pain of being summarily relocated.<sup>672</sup> However, the removal not only dispersed Muslim communities, but also weakened the authority of the clerics.

In overwhelmingly Coloured and Indian Muslim areas there almost always were small components of Muslims from other groups too, and in a few areas like Woodstock, closer to the inner city, the Muslim population was also more racially mixed. However, the areas within the Cape Metropole with most Muslims were largely inhabited by Coloured Muslims, and most of these areas had the same or more than the Muslim group average

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<sup>671</sup> See the list of claimants in “Every one of us was kicked out of District Six”, *Cape Argus*, 24 November 2000, p. 17; Anwah Nagia, “Never, never, never again”, *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 12.

<sup>672</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, MJC HQ, 23 February 2000. See also “A community refuses to forget”, *Ad-Da’wah*, November 2000, p. 7.

of Coloureds. This suggests a reinforcement of religious, economic and racial identities and interests. Many Indian Muslims also congregated together.

### *Symbolically-important space*

Certain areas, including Rylands, Gatesville and the Bo-Kaap, were distinctly Muslim enclaves, not only demographically, but also visually as far as mosques and local architecture were concerned, and in terms of public community and religious festivals and ceremonies. By 2000, there were 125 mosques in the Western Cape with a total capacity of 105 000 attendees, and of which 124 were in use. The Islamic infrastructure had also developed during the period 1994-2000. The building of twelve mosques or more than 9% started in 1994 and thereafter. In two of these cases, two former churches were converted into mosques.<sup>673</sup>

At 109 mosques the Shafi law school predominated, at 4 the Hanafi law school predominated and at 12 both schools were followed. In 94 or more than 75% of these mosques, including those built from 1994 onwards, facilities were predominantly for males. For every 10 men only 6 or fewer women were provided for, and in five mosques no prayer ablution facilities for women existed.<sup>674</sup>

The clustering of Muslims, a compact rather than dispersed minority, in certain areas provided a base for a specifically Muslim community life. Often, mosques could be seen, the call to prayer could be heard, participation in various festivals and rituals were possible, and Muslim neighbours were close by, reinforcing identity and a sense of community, but also social control.<sup>675</sup>

However, at least 80% of the members of the MJC in 1999 resided in middle class areas, including Kensington, Constantia, Rondebosch East, Schotsekloof, Athlone, Lansdowne, Surrey Estate, Woodstock, Belgravia, Salt River, Crawford, Rylands, Gatesville, Lotus River, Rocklands, Portlands and Grassy Park. These were also the areas in which almost 60% of the 345 Muslims with doctorates resided and which were most favoured by Muslims in the top two income categories.<sup>676</sup>

Although imam Rashied Omar of Claremont Main Street mosque clearly rejected a “self-insulating” approach, in general the pattern of Muslim spatial clustering persisted and there were no signs that many clerics opposed it. Several Muslim clerics participated in private lobbying and popular mobilization on issues relating to the following five spaces during the period 1994-2000: the Bo-Kaap, the Oudekraal Development, the Tana Baru cemetery, the St. Cyprians case, and District Six. Imams often took the lead in establishing Islamic infrastructure in areas where Muslims did not live in great numbers

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<sup>673</sup> Boorhaanol Islam, *Taraweeg Survey 2000*, pp. 8, 38, 86, 88, 115, 116, 117, 134, 145, 146, 147, 168 and 173.

<sup>674</sup> Boorhaanol Islam, *Taraweeg Survey 2000*, p. 8.

<sup>675</sup> Akeela Gaibie-Dawood, "Interview with Sheikh Sadullah Khan," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 2 (March 1999), pp. 46-49 on p. 47 and Abdulkader Tayob, "Counting Muslims in South Africa" at <http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/religion/census.htm>. Also see the section on space in chapter 7.

<sup>676</sup> *Muslim Judicial Council Membership List 26/10/1999*.

before, for example in Parow and Rondebosch.<sup>677</sup> However, they did not play a direct role in the reclamation of District Six.<sup>678</sup>

According to Manjra and Cachalia, by 1999 there was a widespread retreat by many of these Muslims into their physical and psychological areas of the past.<sup>679</sup> Few prominent clerics opposed this trend in word or deed. As far as space was concerned, the contribution of clerics covered four areas: the promotion of exclusively or predominantly Muslim areas, the preservation of sites of religious, historical or cultural importance to Muslims, opposition to infringements on the Islamic character of an area, and the establishment of new Islamic infrastructure.

In this regard, there were cases of both wide-ranging cooperation, for example on the Oudekraal development, and internal competition, for example between those in favour of exclusively Muslim areas and those who rejected the promotion of what they saw as Muslim ghettos. Clerics were also able to establish common ground for cooperation with other Muslim or non-Muslim actors, for instance with environmental groups in the Oudekraal case<sup>680</sup> and with state agencies, media personnel and academics in the Tana Baru case.

The sacred order was also projected in the media sphere. Like *Muslim Views* and Radio 786, the MJC only launched its website after 1999.<sup>681</sup> During the period under discussion, the websites did not become important sites of power projection or contestation. However, the community radio stations affiliated to the MJC and IUC, respectively Voice of the Cape and Radio 786, did become such sites.

### *The Muslim audio sphere*

The potential influence of the radio stations resulted in fierce competition between the MJC and the IUC, which shared a frequency in the Greater Cape Town area. The MJC claimed that about 100 mosques were represented on the management structures of the Voice of the Cape.<sup>682</sup> Radio 786 had about 61 000 listeners in June 1996, which grew to

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<sup>677</sup> "Stellenbosch Muslims in Arms Against Violation of Mosque Sanctity," *Muslim Views*, April 1994; p. 5, "Northern Suburbs establishes Islamic foothold," *Muslim Views*, February 1996, p. 14; "Sparkle returns to 'Pearl of the Boland' ", *Muslim Views*, February 2000, p. 2; "Rondebosch East Islamic Society: Grand visions, formidable realities," *Muslim Views*, February 2000, pp. 16-17 on p. 16.

<sup>678</sup> "District Six: What would have happened?", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1997, p. 9.

<sup>679</sup> Shatley Q and Mahmood Sanglay, "The Muslim political landscape in SA," *Muslim Views*, May 1999, p. 4. Both Dr. Shuaib Manjra and Azhar Cachalia, secretary for safety and security noticed a trend towards "ghettoization". Manjra identified a similar trend in the KwaZulu Natal province. Dr. Shuaib Manjra, "Muslim crisis of identity in post-apartheid South Africa," lecture, Cape Technikon, 4 December 1999.

<sup>680</sup> "Mazaar Crisis – Monumental No Vote," *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 12. See also Achmat Davis, "Oudekraal: Of Saints and Sinners," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 31 no. 4 (November 1996), pp. 9-13, "Oudekraal still under threat," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 4 (November 1997), p. 59 and Mogamat Toffar, "EMAC confident of success in Oudekraal campaign," *Muslim Views*, October 1998, p. 4.

<sup>681</sup> "Muslim Views launches website", *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 10.

<sup>682</sup> "New management brings new business drive to Voice of the Cape", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1997, p. 3.

almost 135 000 listeners by June 2000, of which about 65% were in the lowest socio-economic groups.<sup>683</sup>

As the campaign of urban violence in the 1990s increased in intensity, the MJC-aligned Voice of the Cape and Muslim Broadcasting Association sent a confidential letter on 27 February 1998 to influence the broadcasting authorities to have Radio 786's licence withdrawn on the grounds that it had hidden agendas, used subtle incitement and was supporting PAGAD. The effort did not succeed, but the licence remained temporary for many years. When the existence of the letter was revealed, the IUC used it to attack the reliability of the MJC and its clerics, while the MJC president Gabriels was threatened not to deliver a sermon. The MJC leadership denied any involvement, while the MBA stated that it only wanted an own frequency every day and never opposed the application of Radio 786.<sup>684</sup>

According to some clerics, the radio stations publicly reflected the infighting among Muslims and thus had a negative impact on the image of Muslims among non-Muslims. However, the radio stations were viewed more positively than negatively by all the clerics interviewed. Imam Abdurahman Bassier said that an advantage was that people could express themselves in their everyday language, uninhibited and without having to be prepared. For most, the stations raised the religious consciousness and broader knowledge of Muslims, also while they were with their family, and communicated news faster.<sup>685</sup>

Muslims formed a diverse population with distinctive groups and sometimes communities. The historically rooted Bo-Kaap area with its old mosques and proximity to Cape Town provide a different context and exuded a different atmosphere than the environment of some of the recent and more impoverished predominantly Coloured Cape Flats areas with less Islamic infrastructure. The MJC president Ebrahim Gabriels acknowledged that too little attention was paid to the black townships or rural areas.<sup>686</sup> Local religious and group political dynamics in such areas could also divert from general trends, for example with high percentages of converts among the population. However,

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<sup>683</sup> "Radio 786... is here to stay", *Al-Miftah*, September/October 2000, pp. 8-9.

<sup>684</sup> Achmad Cassiem and Ali Adams on Radio 786, 26 October 2000; Sh. Achmat Sedick (MJC), Yusuf Jacobs (MBA chairman) and Shaheed Jacobs on Voice of the Cape, 29 October 2000; Shaykh Shakier Achmad on Radio 786, 30 October 2000; *Chairman's Address*, Islamic Unity Convention Biennial General meeting, Athlone Technical College, Athlone, 25 November 2000, pp. 5-6; *National Chairman's Report*, Islamic Unity Convention, Annual General Meeting, Athlone Technical College, Athlone, 25 November 2000, pp. 4-6 and personal attendance of discussion at the meeting.

<sup>685</sup> Interviews with Shaykh Achmat Sedick at the MJC offices in Athlone, 23 February 2000; Ebrahim Tofa, assistant imam at Kooloodul Moemeneen mosque, Goodwood on 15 November 2000; Imam Yusuf Abdullatief at Al-Jaamia Mosque, Stegman Road, Claremont on 20 November 2000; Imam Abdurrahman Bassier of the Masjied Boorhaanol Islam, Bo-Kaap, 20 November 2000; Maulana Ebrahim Khan of the Coowatool Islam mosque in the Bo-Kaap at his Rylands home on 22 November 2000; Maulana Abdurrahman Segers and Imam Amin Festus of the Masjiduth Thaalith, Beacon Valley on 22 November 2000 and Sh. Riyadh Walls at his home in Cravenby on 30 November 2000.

<sup>686</sup> "Face to Face in conversation with Shaykh Ebrahim Daniels", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 35 no. 1 (January 2000), pp. 26-28 on p. 28.

the stations significantly enabled the maintenance of Muslim identity and a sacred order that incorporated these diverse areas.

### **The competition for authority**

#### *Authority and hierarchy*

In the Western Cape the group which exercised religious leadership included individuals with non-scholarly backgrounds who acted as the *imam* (prayer leader) of a mosque and those with scholarly backgrounds, the so-called *ulama* (singular *alim*), who sometimes also acted as imams.<sup>687</sup> Religious scholars are addressed as *shaykh*, *maulana* or *imam*, depending on whether they were graduates of Arabic, Indian-Pakistani or South African institutions respectively.<sup>688</sup> The term “clerics” is used here to refer to all of them.

The Muslim Judicial Council (MJC), founded in 1945 by 62 Muslim clerics, was more than double the size by the late 1990s. A membership list in 1999 indicated 149 people, including 8 associate members. Among the 141 clerics themselves, 61 were shaykhs, denoting higher religious education in an Arabian country, 30 were maulanas with an education in India or Pakistan, while 50 were South African-educated imams.<sup>689</sup>

The MJC had monthly consultative meetings with its members, but its authority over them varied. According to Bangstad, the clerics of the MJC also largely adhered to middle-class normativities and moralities, while the greater part of the Muslims were in the core or marginal working-class people with more diverse interpretations or implementation of Islamic injunctions.<sup>690</sup>

The continued strong local authority of imams, other competing clerical bodies, the presence of community radio stations and organizations, and the often higher skills of Muslim professionals meant that the MJC was unable to establish complete dominance as community leaders. In addition, not only in the IUC, but also in other institutions, the general respect for the imams was uneven.

Before 1994, the Sunni Ulama council was founded because of doctrinal differences and to fight against Wahhabism. It claimed to have 12 clerics aligned to it with a rotating chairman.<sup>691</sup> The Majlis ash-Shura enjoyed the support of a number of mosques in the Cape Flats. While the Majlis ash-Shura al-Islami claimed greater authority due to its allegedly more open, rational and critical understanding of Islam, the MJC claimed greater authority because it represented the greatest number of mosques and was

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<sup>687</sup> Esack, *Qu'ran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 18 fn. 5 and “The Masjid and the Imam,” *Ad-Da'wah*, February 2000, p. 6.

<sup>688</sup> A.K. Tayob, “Ulama’ in Islam: Clergy or Repositories of Knowledge”, *Muslim Views*, February 1995, p. 16.

<sup>689</sup> *Muslim Judicial Council Membership List 26/10/1999*.

<sup>690</sup> Bangstad, *Global flows, local appropriations*, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>691</sup> Interview with Maulana Ebrahim Khan, Rylands, 22 November 2000.

recognized as the official intermediary for Muslims in the province by the ANC government.<sup>692</sup>

The United Ulama Council of SA, dominated by the MJC, was another body created to fight for all Muslims in all spheres.<sup>693</sup> However, both inside the Muslim community and in interaction between Muslims and other groups and institutions the leading organization and main contender for community leadership were the MJC and Islamic Unity Convention (IUC) respectively.

After many months of intense discussion, mass meetings, meetings of special interest groups like women and teachers, and workshops throughout South Africa, the IUC was established over the weekend of 20 to 22 March 1994 in Bellville. An estimated 254 Muslim organizations from across SA attended the meeting to form the IUC.<sup>694</sup> The first chairman was Sh. Abdulkarriem Toffar and the vice-chairman Sh. Sa'Dullah Khan.<sup>695</sup>

An autonomous body, the National Ulama Council was established under Sh. Abdulkarriem Toffar. It claimed that 60 Muslim imams from throughout SA became members, while Muslim professional people in supporting disciplines became associate members.<sup>696</sup> The IUC claimed greater authority than the MJC because there were more organizations affiliated to it. It also contested the MJC's support of Muslim unity and this willingness to promote unity ironically became an area of contestation in the battle for influence between the MJC and IUC.

Especially since 1998, difficulties arose in the IUC. Activities became more sporadic, perhaps depending on the availability of donations. Imam Cassiem's leadership was criticized for being autocratic, too politically-focused and entailing too little consultation and communication. Sh. Toffar left at the end of 1999 and handed over to Sh. Burhan Abbas. The support of business people dwindled, the Annual General Meeting of the IUC for 2000 had to be cancelled twice and the IUC HQ was to be closed because Sh. Abbas was the only one active there.<sup>697</sup> By 2000, only a few imams were publicly associated with the IUC.<sup>698</sup>

However, the chairman of the IUC from 1995 onwards, Imam Achmad Cassiem, and the radio station of the IUC, Radio 786, who attracted a corps of professional personnel, remained very influential in the broader community, and Radio 786 was able to sustain itself. Community initiatives challenged the authority of many clerics, which had been weakened by the dispersion of parts of the Muslim population in the 1950s and 1960s, the lame resistance to racial discriminatory measures, the emergence of more educated

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<sup>692</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Charting Institutions on Expanding Frontiers," *Annual Review of Islam in South Africa* issue no. 2 (June 1999), pp. 1-4 on pp. 2-3.

<sup>693</sup> Interview with Maulana Ebrahim Khan, Rylands, 22 November 2000.

<sup>694</sup> "Formation of the Islamic Unity convention," *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1998, pp. 7-11 on p. 7.

<sup>695</sup> "Did you know?" *Al-Miftah*, November/December 1998, p. 16.

<sup>696</sup> "Formation of the Islamic Unity convention," *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1998, pp. 7-11 on p. 10.

<sup>697</sup> Interview with Sh. Burhan Abbas, Gatesville, 14 November 2000.

<sup>698</sup> Interview with Sh. Burhan Abbas, Gatesville, 1 March 2000 and letter from Shaykh Abdulkarriem Toffar dated April 2000.

professionals, and new thinking among foreign Muslim thinkers and local young Muslims.<sup>699</sup>

These community initiatives became prominent in the mid-1990s. PAGAD and the Islamic Unity Convention with Radio 786 were the most prominent ones. Nevertheless, at least initially, the MJC had discussions with PAGAD on *Shariah* law and with the initiating group of the IUC, the Muslim Unity Society.<sup>700</sup>

The MJC certainly played an important role, especially in interaction between the Muslims and Muslim institutions on the one hand and other institutions and groups on the other. It also defended the importance of the clerics, stating that an attack on the clerics meant an attack on Islam in SA.<sup>701</sup> Nevertheless, its existence and activities did not remove the considerable influence of the imams among many in their congregations.<sup>702</sup> It also did not completely succeed in establishing hegemony as community leaders.

Boorhaanol Islam spoke of leadership deficiencies and suggested a specialized diversified leadership, as well as a more active role by those who had performed the *haji*.<sup>703</sup> The IUC and PAGAD tried to weaken the authority of the MJC clerics, and Radio 786, for example its presenter Mansur Modak, promoted the idea among Muslims that everyone is a potential imam. However, as far as a sacred order was concerned, the imams and clerics within and outside the MJC remained the primary interpreters and actors, although not the only ones.

#### *Clerics, mosques and mosque committees*

The mosque tradition among Cape Muslims that developed during the nineteenth century had certain features. The imam played a central role at the expense of lay persons. Mosque practices defined the conceptual world within which Muslims lived, one that was self-referential and independent. According to Tayob, this state of affairs contrasted with the politics of accommodation in mosque building in the Transvaal that limited the Islamic rules and conduct in the mosque.<sup>704</sup>

In other provinces, mosques also were symbols of ethnic and racial groupings among Muslims, who mostly came from diverse ethnic and linguistic groups in small villages and towns in India. Indian-controlled mosques there granted more power to the trustees

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<sup>699</sup> See Abdulkader Tayob, *Islamic Resurgence in South Africa: The Muslim Youth Movement* (UCT Press: Cape Town, 1995), especially chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>700</sup> "Khutbah focus - The only alternative", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1997, p. 11.

<sup>701</sup> "Defenders of the Realm", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 1997, pp. 7-8.

<sup>702</sup> Interview with Farid Sayed, 28 January 2000 and Imam Yusuf Abdullatief, Stegman Road mosque, Claremont 20 November 2000.

<sup>703</sup> "Leadership" and "The 'Ulema: its leadership role revisited", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 1 (February 1997), pp. 2-3 and 24-31; "Haji: Of morals and mebos", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 2 (April 1997), p. 2-3.

<sup>704</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, *Islam in South Africa: Mosques, Imams, and Sermons* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), pp. 74-76.

and committees, often with merchants as members, than to the imams, and these patterns tended to be reproduced in Indian-controlled mosques at the Cape.<sup>705</sup>

Nevertheless, Tayob concludes, the legal and political history of a mosque had a greater impact on the nature of the mosque organization than ethnic or linguistic characteristics. One mosque could at different times occupy a different position on the spectrum of power relations between the imam, mosque committee and congregation.<sup>706</sup>

Several kinds of relationships between an *imam*, a mosque committee and a mosque congregation were possible during the post-1994 period. In many ways, however, the mosque tradition among Cape Muslims that had developed during the nineteenth century was reproduced. The imam played a central role and the mosques provided sites for Muslim worship and communal leadership, while mosque practices were linked to a self-referential conceptual world within which Muslims lived.<sup>707</sup>

The authority of clerics in this world continued to be based on their Islamic knowledge, the *Shariah*, and the provision of ritual and educational services to the community in return for some form of loyalty and support.<sup>708</sup> The services included the Friday sermon, presiding at rites of passage, adult education and providing moral and ethical guidance in the form of rulings.<sup>709</sup>

According to the MJC leadership, the *Shariah* stated that every piece of property, once it is established for mosque purposes, becomes the property of Allah and therefore all Muslims have collective access to and property rights over it. There were six possible problem cases in this regard.<sup>710</sup>

Firstly, the imam sometimes claimed, on the basis of his long service and position at the mosque, that he was indispensable and could only be removed from his position by death. Secondly, all or certain committee members felt that they had contributed enough money to the mosque to have themselves registered as its trustees. Thus, they could not be removed from their positions except by death. Thirdly, an individual or family fully sponsored the establishment of the mosque and its running costs, thus obtaining a final say on all matters concerning the mosque.<sup>711</sup>

A fourth case was where a property was purchased by ancestors and converted into a mosque. The Imamate of the mosque stayed in the family and only family members had the right to be imams or mosque officials. Fifthly, some mosques had a system where the imam was selected from a particular family lineage and only someone from this family could serve as imam. Families swore allegiance to them and the particular mosque, which

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<sup>705</sup> Ibid., pp. 44, 67-68.

<sup>706</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>707</sup> See chapter 2 here and Tayob, *Islam in South Africa*, op. cit., pp. 74-76.

<sup>708</sup> Ibid.

<sup>709</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Charting Institutions on Expanding Frontiers," *Annual Review of Islam in South Africa*, issue No. 2 (June 1999), pp. 1-4 on pp. 1-2.

<sup>710</sup> "The Masjid & the Imam", *Ad-Da'wah*, February 2000, p. 6.

<sup>711</sup> Ibid.



was compared to the Arabic notion of *bayah*, and only those had the right to serve in low and middle-level positions on the mosque committee.<sup>712</sup>

Sixthly, some mosques had an ethnic or law school basis. For example, it belonged to members of the Indian group following the Hanafi law school, and the imam and mosque committee members had to be Indian followers of the same law school.<sup>713</sup> The legal and political history of a mosque had a greater impact on the nature of the mosque organization than ethnic or linguistic characteristics. However, the Indian-controlled mosques tended to grant more power to the trustees and committees, often with merchants as members, than to the imams, and these patterns were reproduced in Indian-controlled mosques at the Cape.<sup>714</sup>

Many imams were not paid much by their congregations. This reinforced the influence of existing patterns of power and wealth. According to *Muslim Views*, for example, the average pay in 1998 was about R2000 per month, sometimes much less, and without benefits regarding housing, medical aid or children's education.<sup>715</sup> Many imams had to work hard just to survive financially, and often had a second job.

This situation influenced the relative power of the imam, mosque committee and congregation.<sup>716</sup> One imam could also at different times occupy a different position on the spectrum of power relations between the imam, mosque committee and congregation.<sup>717</sup> In some cases, groups in the congregation resisted the power of the imam or the mosque committee.<sup>718</sup>

Between the clerics there were relationships of cooperation, negotiation and competition. These relationships were also apparent in the interaction between the most important umbrella body of clerics, the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC), and its main contender for leadership of the community, the Islamic Unity Convention (IUC).

### *The clerics and the MJC*

The MJC was based on mosque imams and religious scholars with associate members too. Imams, not the mosque committee, usually chose whether to align to the MJC or not. Community structures, often linked to a mosque, were sometimes aligned to the MJC.

In the 1990s, the MJC defined its mission as the preservation and strengthening of Islam in all its dimensions and unity amongst all Muslims, especially "those who comprise the religious leadership of the community".<sup>719</sup> The MJC leadership group since 1994 has

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<sup>712</sup> Ibid. Also see Tayob, *Islam in South Africa*, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>713</sup> Tayob, *Islam in South Africa*, op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>714</sup> Ibid., pp. 44, 67-68.

<sup>715</sup> "More than just greener pastures", *Muslim Views*, September 1998, p. 6.

<sup>716</sup> Interviews with Shaykh Burhan Abbas, Gatesville, 1 March 2000 and Imam Amin Festus, Masjidul Thaalith, Beacon Valley, Mitchells Plain, 22 November 2000.

<sup>717</sup> Tayob, *Islam in South Africa*, op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>718</sup> "Valhalla Park masjid picketed by Madressa students", *Muslim Views*, June 1996, p. 4.

<sup>719</sup> *The Muslim Judicial Council* (pamphlet) (Cape Town: MJC, undated).

been mostly in the 35-45 age range, with people in the 45-55 age group consulted as seniors. Most of the MJC clerics had certificates, but older ones who studied under individual clerics were also accepted.<sup>720</sup>

Perhaps to prevent negative sentiments against the relative youth of the new leadership, the Imaarah, a body of ten elders, was revived. The Executive Committee was re-elected every two years.<sup>721</sup> Under Sh. Nazeem Mohamed the leadership position of the Imaarah and Executive was merged in one person. Later, Sh. Mohamed headed the Imaarah and Sh. Gabriels became the Executive President. This may have been an effort to allow the younger generation of leaders to come to the fore while retaining the authority of the senior leadership.

Requests for a legal opinion (*fatwa*) by the clerics were researched by one paid researcher. The signature of the MJC chairman or the Imaarah chairman was sufficient to make a ruling an official one by the MJC.<sup>722</sup> Rulings in response to an individual's problem went to that individual only, while rulings that concerned all people were announced in mosques or broadcast by the radio stations. By 2000, four signatures tended to be customary.<sup>723</sup>

MJC claimed to represent most clerics and therefore indirectly most congregations in the community.<sup>724</sup> Both the *Shariah* and the representation of the clerics, two sometimes conflicting factors, were used to base its claim to community leadership. The MJC argued that the *Shariah* was the final authority in this regard, with the MJC as the most authoritative interpreters of the *Shariah* in the Cape.

The MJC also emphasized that the community had the right to elect an imam and that an imam had no right to appoint his successor, in contrast to the elements of hereditary imamship. However, in addition the MJC wanted to be a representative body for the independent clerics, and the mosque-transcending discourses made the position of these clerics vulnerable.

Disciplinary procedures against transgressor imams existed, and an increased number of ordinary disputes made formalized arbitration mechanisms necessary. To maintain its support, the MJC abstained from strong measures that would alienate the imams. As a result, in some cases where disputes between contending imams or the imam and congregations or imams and the MJC could not be solved, parties preferred to seek recourse through the South African courts.<sup>725</sup>

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<sup>720</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, MJC HQ, 23 February 2000.

<sup>721</sup> Ibid.

<sup>722</sup> Ibid.

<sup>723</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, MJC HQ, Athlone, 22 March 2000.

<sup>724</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, MJC HQ, Athlone, 23 February 2000.

<sup>725</sup> Ibid.

### *The qualifications, appointment and regulation of imams*

While the clerics were trained in religious matters, they did not have the requisite administrative skills in a number of cases to oversee the organization of the congregation. The Claremont Main Street Mosque was one of the mosques trying to address this issue by providing relevant training and services to other mosques.<sup>726</sup> However, this lack of skills sometimes also influenced the relations of authority in a congregation between clerics and Muslims from the professions.

The quality of religious expertise also became an issue. The IUC, the Boorhaanol Islam movement and prominent independent imams periodically expressed criticism that in the Western Cape a number of unqualified people had become mosque imams based on community decisions.<sup>727</sup> Criticism about the credentials of some clerics formed part of the IUC's campaign against the MJC's leadership.

Both Sh. Achmat Sedick and Maulana Ebrahim Khan, respectively secretary general of the MJC and chairman of the Sunni Ulama Council, stated in this regard that character rather than qualifications remained the most important criterion.<sup>728</sup> However, in 1998 the MJC leadership, possibly in response to the IUC attacks, also said that the time had come to assert and formalize religious authority to prevent people with limited knowledge of the *Shariah* from interpreting the *Shariah* guidelines.<sup>729</sup>

In 1999, the MJC proposed a procedure for the election of an imam that included certain required qualifications. Among these qualifications were a sound knowledge of the Imamate and of Prophetic and Islamic history, a good understanding of the Quran and *Sunnah*, an adequate knowledge of jurisprudence, some knowledge of contemporary ideologies, the ability to do some Arabic studies and proficiency in Afrikaans and English. An imam's capabilities had to include the ability to read the Quran and deliver a message well, the ability to act as an arbitrator, and the ability to perform all the ritual services normally required by people. Character requirements included a life conducted in accordance with the Quran and *Sunnah*.<sup>730</sup>

According to the MJC, an imam's duties and responsibilities included leading all congregational prayers at the mosque, acquaintance with all matters relating to activities at the mosque and an active role in youth and adult education. The imam's duties also

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<sup>726</sup> Interview with Fagdi Gamieldien, administrator, Claremont Main Road Mosque, November 2000.

<sup>727</sup> "Leadership," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 1 (February 1997), pp. 2-3 on p. 3; "Focus on the 'Ulema, Interview with Sh. Faaik Gamieldien," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 1 (February 1997), pp. 24-31 on p. 26; "Getting to know how qualified our Sheikhs, Imams, Moulanas and Islamic Scholars are," *IUC News*, March 1995, p. 6..

<sup>728</sup> Interviews with Sh. Achmat Sedick, MJC HQ, 23 February 2000 and with Maulana Ebrahim Khan on 22 November 2000 at his home in Rylands.

<sup>729</sup> "Khutbah Focus: Knowledge of Shari'ah Indispensable," *Ad-Da'wah*, January 1998, p. 10.

<sup>730</sup> "Proposed procedure for the election of an Imam," *Ad-Da'wah*, vol. 6 no. 4 August 1999, p. 4.

included delivering lectures at the mosque on all holy and special days, including at the main Friday prayers, the two Eids, Mi'raaj, Lailatul Baraa, Lailatul Qadr and Moulood.<sup>731</sup> These requirements clearly set out the imams' role in integrity maintenance according to Paden's model.

All references by the MJC to the imam were to a male, and clearly no female imam was foreseen. Through its rulings the MJC was also able to reproduce a male-oriented interpretation of Islam. An undated ruling by the MJC indicated that it was incumbent on every male to attend the sermon and prayer on Fridays, but not on females, although they were not restricted from attendance. It also advised that Muslim males be given off from work for a specified period on Fridays so that they would be able to attend the sermon.<sup>732</sup>

The proposed selection procedure was that a selection panel would process applications for positions. The panel would consist of 3 members of the mosque committee, 3 independent scholars to be elected by the congregation, and three members of the congregation elected by the congregation.<sup>733</sup> This procedure would give the congregation a decisive say in the selection of new imams and at least theoretically weakened the position of imams whose selection depended on descent or ownership of the mosque complex.

Many imams approached said that the clerics did not always act as community leaders in the way they should have acted. A lack of cohesion was one complaint, but others said that the cohesion of the MJC, for example, had grown over the years. There were efforts by the MJC leadership, both in the realm of ideas and that of structures, to enhance the cohesion and status of the clerics. The MJC described the clerics as the inheritors of the knowledge left by the Prophet Muhammad, and as the historical torchbearers of the Cape Muslim community.<sup>734</sup>

The president of the MJC until 1999, Sh. Nazeem Mohamed, cautioned that the imams should be representatives of their community and that they should set examples by their conduct. He also emphasized that the clerics were the most precious possession of the community because they guided people to heaven, and tried to instil a fraternal identity among clerics.<sup>735</sup>

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<sup>731</sup> Ibid. Noticeably, the ceremony celebrating the birth of the Prophet is included here. This festival is criticized by the Deobandi school as potentially contradicting strict monotheism, but has historically been widely practised in the Cape.

<sup>732</sup> *Jumu'ah – The Friday Congregational Prayer*, MJC Fatwa, Athlone, undated.

<sup>733</sup> "Proposed procedure for the election of an Imam," *Ad-Da'wah*, vol. 6 no. 4 August 1999, p. 4.

<sup>734</sup> Interview with Maulana Abdurrahman Segers, Masjidul Thaalith, Beacon Valley, Mitchells Plain, 22 November 2000; interview with Imam Abdurrahman Bassier, Bo-Kaap, 20 November 2000; "A Sign of the Times," *Ad-Da'wah*, vol. 3 no. 3 (February 1997), p. 1.

<sup>735</sup> Sh. Irfaan Hendricks and Sh. Faik Gamielien, Commemoration Program for Sh. Nazeem Mohammed, Voice of the Cape, 20 November 2000.

### *Integrity maintenance and doctrinal contestation*

Muslims follow a lunar calendar, which includes two Eids (celebrations). Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated on completion of the month of fasting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of Shawwaal and Eid-ul-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice) falls on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Thul Hijja. Since 1989 three broad camps had emerged in SA, namely those who observed both Ramadaan and Eid al Adha with the Islamic authorities in Makkah, those who observed the Eid al Adha with Makkah and those who observed Ramadaan and both Eids according to local sightings of the moon in SA. Most Muslims seemed to follow the local sighting of the crescent moon, with only 14 mosques or less than 9% following Makkah. Most Muslims in the world do not follow Makkah in this regard.<sup>736</sup>

However, the MJC did not make a firm decision about which method was preferable.<sup>737</sup> This was one of the arguments used by PAGAD to justify its claim of weak leadership by the MJC. The IUC used the issue to illustrate that only the IUC, not the MJC, would be able to bring unity to the Muslim community.<sup>738</sup>

Sufism in the Western Cape found expression in various ways. There were a few explicitly Sufi mosques and imams, for example the Azzavia, Habibai, Husami and Grassy Park mosques. Secondly, there were Sufi practices like Moulood celebrations of the Prophet Mohammed's birthday<sup>739</sup> and *dhikr* ceremonies (liturgical repetition of the names of Allah), for which Sufism provided a popular structure. Thirdly, there were Sufi orders, like the Alawi, Qadiri, Chisti and Naqshbandi orders. They were often ethnic and family networks too, with the Chisti order for example being predominantly Kokani Indian. Fourthly, some groups used Sufi practices without links to a particular mosque or order.<sup>740</sup>

After 1994 there was a surge in Sufism in the province. The Muslim academic and *Muslim Views* columnist Suleman Dangor attributed the success of Sufis to the simplicity of their message and the direct emotional appeal.<sup>741</sup> Similarly, Tayob referred to the important role of emotions in Muslims' understanding and experience of Islam, often linked to Sufi- or Sufi-derived practices. He also noted a borrowing between different Sufi orders and practices, a lower threshold to Sufi initiation and less strict hierarchies and spiritual disciplines.<sup>742</sup>

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<sup>736</sup> Sh. Saligh Dien, "The 'Edihul Adha Khutbah", *Ad-Da'wah* May 1997, p. 9; Sh. Achmat Sedick, letter to The Manager, Standard Bank, 29 February 2000.

<sup>737</sup> Sh. Achmat Sedick, letter to The Manager, Standard Bank, 29 February 2000.

<sup>738</sup> IUC Bi-Annual General Meeting, Athlone, 24 November 2000.

<sup>739</sup> For an overview of the many mosques hosting Moulood celebrations, see "Moulood Jamaahs", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 3 (June 1999), pp. 21-31.

<sup>740</sup> Interview with Dr. Yusuf da Costa, Gatesville Mosque, 1 March 2000. See also Moosa, "Islam in South Africa, op. cit., pp. 137-138 and Muhammed Haron, "Da'wah Movements and Sufi Tariqahs: Competing for Spiritual Spaces in Contemporary South(ern) Africa", *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol. 25 no. 2 (August 2005), pp. 260-285.

<sup>741</sup> Suleman Dangor, "Imams, Sufis and da'is," *Muslim Views*, September 1997, p. 14.

<sup>742</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Islam between Ethics and Deep Disposition," *Muslim Views*, November 1994, p. 10.

However, the Muslim media also played a role in spreading a greater awareness of Sufism. The radio stations affiliated to the MJC and the IUC both had regular and open discussions on Sufism.<sup>743</sup> Dr. Yusuf Da Costa, head of the local Naqshbandi order, was of the opinion that while the Voice of the Cape station promoted Sufism but not deliberately, Radio 786 deliberately promoted it and softly sidelined critics of Sufism.<sup>744</sup>

While Sufism emphasized a mystical dimension in Islam, it did not necessarily result in an apolitical otherworldly focus. A number of Sufis were former or active socio-political activists, including Dr. Yusuf da Costa of the Naqshbandi Order and *Muslim Views* editor Farid Sayed. The Naqshbandi Order, for example, took clear stands on the conflicts in Palestine and Chechnya and also participated in marches and demonstrations on these issues. *Muslim Views* linked Moulood to the struggle against poverty, crime, environmental destruction, challenges to family values, and globalisation.<sup>745</sup>

A group of supporters in PAGAD linked to Qibla supported militant Islamism, and even acted as apologists for puritanical Salafis like Sh. Omar Abdel Rahman and later Osama bin Laden. Their support for Salafist figures was less based on ideological affinity with puritanical Salafism, which condemns Sufism, than on their association with this defiance of US policies in the world. Several Qibla supporters even tried to use Sufist rituals to promote Islamic consciousness and coordinate activities among young people, and PAGAD sometimes linked its planning meetings and *dhikr* ceremonies.<sup>746</sup>

However, among some Sufi leaders there was a greater emphasis on the spiritual again.<sup>747</sup> This was increasingly relevant in the context of the deep political divisions in the Muslim population and increased intra-Muslim violence after 1994. The emphasis on the spiritual and a more apparently apolitical sense of meaning may have served as a solace, especially among middle-class Muslims<sup>748</sup>, in a period widely experienced as full of tension and conflict.

When Sh. Nazeem Al-Haqqani, the international head of the Naqshbandi order, visited SA at the end of 2000, tense relationships between some clerics and some Sufi orders were apparent. The Minister of Transport, Mr. Dullah Omar, officially welcomed him on behalf of the government and ANC provincial leader Ebrahim Rasool visited him.<sup>749</sup>

<sup>743</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Turning to the core: Sufism on the rise?" *Annual Review of Islam in SA*, issue 2 (June 1999), pp. 11-13.

<sup>744</sup> Interview with Dr. Yusuf da Costa, Masjidul Quds mosque, 1 March 2000.

<sup>745</sup> Ibid. See also "Editorial", *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 32.

<sup>746</sup> Interview with Amien Ahmed, manager of Radio 786, 1 April 2000. Radio 786 broadcast a community notice on 24 March 2000 of such a meeting at the house of imam Ismail Latief, Nurul Islam mosque, Strand. See also "Thikr sessions at the Masajid & PAGAD", *Ad-Da'wah* April 1998, p. 2.

<sup>747</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Turning to the core: Sufism on the rise?" *Annual Review of Islam in SA*, issue 2 (June 1999), pp. 11-13; Armien Cassiem, "Post-apartheid Sufi resurgence", *ISIM Review*, No. 19 (Spring 2007), pp. 38-39.

<sup>748</sup> Bangstad, op. cit., pp. 290-291 states that the membership lists of the Naqshbandi order reflected a strong middle class component.

<sup>749</sup> "Naqshbandi Shaikh attracts thousands," *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 8; attendance of private function for Sh. Nazeem in Rylands, 5 November 2000.

However, Dr. Da Costa also had to answer many criticisms by certain clerics, which he described as a conspiracy by Saudi-funded Wahhabis.<sup>750</sup>

While many clerics of the MJC remained sceptical or critical of some Sufist discourses, some, like Sh. Seraj Hendricks, were Sufis too, and there was a less critical approach than in the 1980s. *Ad-Da'wah* gave coverage to the visit of Sufi shaykh Muhammad Alawi al-Maliki to Sh. Nazeem Mohammed, and Voice of the Cape gave a platform to Sufi teachers.<sup>751</sup> The MJC leadership had to take into account that these discourses were relatively entrenched in the history and outlooks of local Muslims, and that many Muslims were increasingly turning to forms of Sufism. The MJC positioned itself in favour of a reformist Sufism, incorporating some historical traditions like Moulood but excluding others that were judged to be not compliant with the *Shariah*. According to Bangstad, this formed part of a broader effort by the MJC leadership to position itself as a defender of Muslim communal interests on issues on which there was broad agreement in Muslim communities.<sup>752</sup>

#### *The MJC, the Ahmadis and Shia Muslims*

The Sunni clerics of the MJC played a role in defining the identity of the Muslim *ummah* at the Cape. This occurred with reference to the Ahmadis, Qadianis and Shia Muslims, viewed by them as unorthodox sects in Islam. Especially a string of legal battles of the MJC since the 1980s against the Ahmadis and Qadianis did much in creating public awareness of the MJC.<sup>753</sup>

In 1995, in a decision that would recognize the authority of the MJC, the appeal court overturned a decision in 1982 that a secular court was more appropriate to decide on the Ahmadi-MJC issue than the main body of Muslim clerics. As a result of the court decision, Ahmadis could legally be barred from mosques, barred from burial in Muslim graveyards and denied Muslim marriages. However, the Ahmadis retained a mosque in Grassy Park.

The unanimous decision of the five (Afrikaner) appeal judges in the case was that those who are charged with the protection of the Muslim faith may safeguard what they consider to be the fundamental tenets of their faith. They also had the authority to excommunicate someone whose convictions and beliefs are in opposition to or not in conformity with those principles. The full bench of the appeal court thus recognized the autonomous position of Muslim clerics in interpreting the tenets of Islam and membership of the *ummah*.<sup>754</sup>

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<sup>750</sup> Dr. Yusuf da Costa on Voice of the Cape, 24 November 2000 and Yusuf da Costa, "Wahhabis are butchers," *Muslim Views*, January/February 2001, p. 16. The potential differences resulted in a major dispute between Sh. Faaik Gamielien and Dr. Da Costa in 2001. See Bangstad, op. cit., pp. 195-225.

<sup>751</sup> "Cape Town receives Sayyid Muhammad Alawai al-Maliki", *Ad-Da'wah*, June 1997, p. 3.

<sup>752</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>753</sup> "The History of the MJC," *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1996, p. 2.

<sup>754</sup> Fu'ad Rahman, "MJC vs Ahmadis Court rules MJC having right to outlaw Ahmadis," *Muslim Views*, November 1995, p. 5.

The 1979 Revolution in Iran had attracted much attention and support in the Muslim world, and Muslims in SA were no exception. In some cases, it was alleged, a few Qibla supporters among the overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim population of the Cape even became Shia too.<sup>755</sup> However, while some activists drew on the Shia political Islam, they mostly saw themselves as Sunni Muslims and it was a marginal phenomenon in the Western Cape. Nevertheless, a scholar, Aftab Haider and the Ahlul-Bayt (Household of the Prophet) Foundation did promote Shia Islam in the Western Cape, with a mosque in Ottery.<sup>756</sup>

In January 1997 the MJC launched its journal against Shia Islam, *Al-Istiqamah*, to counter what it called "Shi-ite infiltration into this society," based on what it described as activities by missionaries, the rate of Sunni conversions and the social problems generated as a result.<sup>757</sup> A series of articles outlining and criticizing Shia Islam also appeared in *Ad-Da'wah*.<sup>758</sup> According to the MJC, a Shia could enter a mosque but could not be an imam. Thus, Shia Muslims were not excluded from the community of Muslims but the dominance of Sunni clerics was preserved by excluding possible competitors.<sup>759</sup>

This issue also served as an extension of the Saudi-supported MJC's struggle against the IUC and Achmad Cassiem, the leader of the IUC and Qibla, which liked to draw on Shia revolutionary discourses and had good ties with Iran. The timing of the journal, for example, coincided with the period when the pro-IUC PAGAD threatened to become much more prominent than the MJC as a contender for community leadership. The MJC used a struggle against Shia Islam, a very limited phenomenon among Cape Muslims, to underline its role as custodian of Sunni Islam in the region and to add to its public profile.

### *Endogamy and boundary-making*

Doctrinal contestation served as boundary-making in terms of Shia Muslims, Sufis and Ahmadis. In addition, the clerics mostly promoted religious endogamy. Ethnic and religious endogamy was less pronounced among non-Indian Muslims than among Indian Muslims. While Indian Muslims have resisted acculturation and emphasized particularism, the Coloured and Cape Malay Muslim community historically incorporated non-Muslims from diverse backgrounds.<sup>760</sup> For example, as many as 25% of marriages in the often impoverished Muslim community of Oceanview involved a Muslim woman and a man who was born non-Muslim. In most cases, the man converted at marriage by *nikah*, when the dowry was paid to the bride's father.<sup>761</sup>

<sup>755</sup> Hassan Solomon, *Muslims and the TRC*, panel discussion at the Cape Technikon, 5 December 1999.

<sup>756</sup> Interview with Sh. Burhan Abbas on 1 March 2000, Gatesville; Bangstad, op. cit., p. 301.

<sup>757</sup> "MJC launches Al-Istiqamah," *Ad-Da'wah*, February 1997, p. 1.

<sup>758</sup> *Ad-Da'wah*, February 1997, p. 7; *Ad-Da'wah*, March 1997, p. 6; *Ad-Da'wah*, June 1997, p. 6; *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1997, p. 5; *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1997, p. 8; *Ad-Da'wah*, January 1998, p. 4.

<sup>759</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, MJC Headquarters Athlone, 23 February 2000.

<sup>760</sup> Moosa, "Islam in South Africa, op. cit., p. 144; Sindre Bangstad, "Islamisation, gender and the social structuring of memory in a Cape Muslim community: A report on preliminary findings," seminar paper presented at the University of Stellenbosch, 30 August 2000.

<sup>761</sup> Bangstad, "Islamisation", op. cit., p. 7.



Nevertheless, or perhaps in response, *Ad-Da'wah*, the mouthpiece of the MJC, which mostly consisted of non-Indian clerics, focused on family affairs too and advocated religious endogamy. According to *Ad-Da'wah*, Muslim men should preferably marry Muslim women. As an alternative, Muslim men may also marry women from the peoples of the book, i.e. Christians or Jews, who were ready to recognize the uniqueness of Allah and practice Islam with sincerity.<sup>762</sup> Nothing was said about the possibility of Muslim women marrying outside their religious group.

Several letters or articles in the *Ad-Da'wah* newspaper referred to the difficulties arising from religiously-mixed relations. According to the head of the MJC Welfare Department, imam Saban, the second major reason for divorce was adultery. "Many Muslim males are continuously involved with non-Muslim women whom they have no intention of marrying, but who often end up pregnant."<sup>763</sup>

*Ad-Da'wah*, a thin newspaper which did not appear regularly, considered it necessary to provide space for two open letters, purportedly by Muslim women married to a non-Muslim. The letters warned other Muslim women not to make the same mistake and reiterated the Quranic injunction that Allah prohibited Muslim women from marrying non-Muslim men.<sup>764</sup> *Boorhaanol Islam* even called a family in which one of the parents is non-Muslim "an increasingly familiar aberration".<sup>765</sup>

## Conclusion

Muslims in the Western Cape constituted an internally heterogeneous population in terms of socio-economic position, race, culture and age, with racial, cultural, religious and socio-economic differences and sometimes frictions. Most Muslims were Coloured or Indian, belonging to national racial minorities in a new political order with a black majority, but also living in a region where Coloureds formed the majority group, often with the deepest historical roots in the area, and where Muslims formed a minority among Coloureds but a majority among Indians. Most Muslims were in an intermediate socio-economic position between blacks and whites.

This diversity posed a challenge to communal and religious leaders. Clerics were in numerous ways involved in creating, strengthening or recasting a sacred order that would reinforce the cohesiveness of the diverse Muslim minority with its limited resources while incorporating its diverse tendencies. The continued strong local authority of imams, other competing clerical bodies, the presence of community radio stations and organizations, and the often higher skills of Muslim professionals meant that the MJC was unable to establish complete dominance as community leaders. However, in the case of the Voice of the Cape the radio station was effectively used to enhance the authority of the MJC.

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<sup>762</sup> "Muslim marriage with Christian & Jewish women," *Ad-Da'wah*, August 1998, p. 10; "How to preserve the Muslim family," *Ad-Da'wah*, August 1998, p. 10.

<sup>763</sup> "MJC releases shocking statistics," *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1997, p. 1.

<sup>764</sup> "An anguished mother's plea," *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 5 and "An open letter to young Muslims," *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1998, p. 4.

<sup>765</sup> "New challenges facing Muslims," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 4 (1994), pp. 2-3.

Although Bangstad's main study covers periods after 2000, he maintains, correctly in my view, that the MJC constructed, argued and defended its authority in new ways after 1994. He links it to a new political space, new means of media and the expectations of Muslims as media consumers, as well as the greater professionalisation among clerics.<sup>766</sup> Two other elements also played a role in this regard. Sh. Achmat Sedick linked the MJC's greater socio-political involvement to deliberate decisions by a new generation of leaders that did not want to repeat the political quietism of the previous generation. In addition, a more prominent role by community-based challengers to its authority, especially PAGAD and the IUC's Radio 786, played an important role in shaping the issues and positions used by the MJC to gain prominence as a defender of communal interests and ideals and to enhance its authority in this way.

Bangstad is also correct that this was a departure from periodic previous tendencies of quietism in the MJC, and that it took on new forms. However, in terms of the centuries-old history of Muslim clerics at the Cape, it was not completely new. In many ways it was a recurrence of previous historical contingencies where the pre-MJC clerics acted as both religious and community leaders to try and increase the cohesion of the diverse Muslims of the Western Cape, and to interact assertively with non-Muslim structures.

Integrity maintenance was provided by a wide range of religious services to Muslims, promoting the five pillars of Islam through mosques, schools, organizations, to a limited extent the internet, publications and the radio stations. By issuing rulings, handling Shariah courts and issuing halaal certificates, clerics in the MJC, IUC and other bodies imposed Islamic frameworks on Muslims and their environment, including the local economy. Oral and non-scripturalist Islamic frameworks, sometimes contrasting with but often interacting with scripturalist frameworks of the clerics and imams, allowed some flexibility in the interaction with the environment and also played a role.

Some clerics contributed to a symbolically important territory by opposing infringements on the Islamic character of certain sites or promoting exclusively Muslim areas, the preservation of sites of religious and cultural value to Muslims, and the creation of new mosque and educational infrastructure. As part of the competitive interaction with the IUC and PAGAD, the MJC tried to further professionalise the clerics. It formulated a benchmark selection procedure and duty sheet for clerics and promoted the authority of the clerics as one fraternity.

Muslim clerics effectively recast the available Muslim identities by turning to a Muslim communal discourse that partly reflected existing identities and elements but partly also reconstructed communal identity to explicitly accommodate a reformed Sufism, marginalize Shia Muslims, favour various forms of Islamism and include a stronger transnational dimension. This recast identity and community of members were supposed to constitute a power base for the main body of clerics, the MJC. However, different conceptualisations of Muslim identity and community were promoted by PAGAD and Radio 786, and the Muslims aligned to the ANC and progressive thinkers. In addition,

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<sup>766</sup> Bangstad, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

secularisation processes also shaped the identities and understandings of Islam of some Muslims.

Both the MJC and the IUC leadership were involved in religious and ideological boundary-making. Such boundary-making was not without internal contradictions or poles of possible tension. The sacred order that emerged was internally heterogeneous and not necessarily the dominant symbolic order of all Muslims at all times. At times, however, most noticeably during Ramadaan and the hadj, the Tricentenary celebrations, the early phase of PAGAD and during protests against Israel during the second Palestinian intifada, many Muslims felt a close kinship with fellow-Muslims and the sacred order served as a symbolic link between most Muslims.

As far as a sacred order was concerned, the imams and clerics within and outside the MJC remained the primary interpreters and actors, although not the only ones. Different actors, including the clerics, promoted diverse conceptualisations of community, and no single social identity became hegemonic. Thus, in the contest for Muslim leadership, the authority of the clerics in the diverse Muslim population remained partial, dispersed and more open to challenge by other actors than not having a position as interpreters of Islam. During the period 1994-2000, the authority of the clerics was also of uneven strength in different contexts, periods and disputes.

## Chapter 5: PAGAD, vigilantism and urban terrorism

### The context of PAGAD's emergence

The incidence of violent crime and the quality of law enforcement differed in three areas of the Cape metropole during the period 1994-2000. Firstly, in the business and tourist areas of central Cape Town and the northern and southern suburbs, violent crime occurred sporadically but was more or less containable by the police. Secondly, in the more hazardous areas of Woodstock and Athlone and on the Cape Flats, protection by the police was uneven. Thirdly, in some highly-populated, high-risk Cape Flats areas like Manenberg, Elsies River and Mitchells Plain, the police at best monitored an uneasy peace during the day. However, the Cape Flats area was not socio-economically homogeneous, and areas like Grassy Park and Mitchells Plain included less troubled neighbourhoods.<sup>767</sup>

A Cape Flats survey in early September 1996 showed that gangs and drugs were the main causes of crime in the neighbourhoods, while drugs, gangsterism and crime in general increased compared to the previous five years. Recorded violent crime in the area increased by 34% between 1994 and 2000 and in 1998, ninety-two percent of Coloureds in the province indicated that the areas in which they lived were unsafe.<sup>768</sup> Drug abuse strongly affected members of the Muslim community. Twenty five percent of clients at the Drug Counselling Centre were revealed to be Muslims.<sup>769</sup> According to the MJC social welfare section, one out of every five Muslim households had to contend with a drug addict.<sup>770</sup> These phenomena were a source of anger and shame to many law-abiding working class, lower middle class and middle class Muslims.

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<sup>767</sup> The information on these trends is based on interviews of police at 150 police stations in the Western Cape where the author was a co-researcher. The results were published in Jean Redpath's *The Hydra phenomenon, rural sitting ducks, and other recent trends around organized crime in the Western Cape*, Institute for Human Rights and Criminal Justice Studies, 2000. For a more general South African background, see Mark Shaw, "Organised Crime in Post-Apartheid South Africa", *ISS Papers* No. 28 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 1998), Don Pinnock, *The Brotherhoods: Street Gangs and State Control in Cape Town* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1984), W. Steenkamp, "Gang boss' day of reckoning," *Cape Times*, 22 July 1997, p. 1; S. Brummer, "PAGAD, gangs mix it up with politics," *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 9 May 1997; S. Pillay, *Problematizing the making of good and evil: gangs and PAGAD*, paper presented to the Third Crossroads in Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, 21 - 25 June 2000, p. 20; Suren Pillay, "Experts, Terrorists, Gangsters: Problematising Public Discourse on a Post-apartheid Showdown" in Herman Wasserman and Sean Jacobs (eds.), *Shifting Selves: Post-Apartheid Essays on Mass Media, Culture and Identity* (Kwela Books: Cape Town, 2003), pp. 283-314 on pp. 286, 298.

<sup>768</sup> Lala Camerer, Antoinette Louw, Mark Shaw, Lilian Artz and Wilfried Scharf, *Crime in Cape Town: Results of a City Victim Survey*, Institute for Security Studies Monograph No. 23 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 1998).

<sup>769</sup> "25% of Drug Counseling Centre clients are Muslims", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 12. See also the editorial "Islam and the Incinerator", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 31 no. 2 (1995), pp. 2-3 on p. 2, which referred to "the widespread addiction to drugs amongst Muslim youth" and states "The illicit drugs industry has become a veritable juggernaut running into billions, and tragically most of its passengers seem to be Muslims."

<sup>770</sup> "MJC releases shocking statistics", *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1997, p. 1.

On many levels, and already long before 1994 or the removal of Coloured communities to the Cape Flats, criminal gangs were strongly entrenched in the socio-economic order of life in the urban Cape. In essence, different gangs with thousands of members ruled by intimidation, bribery and the provision of services like protection and credit guarantees. They also controlled some drug markets. SA had several distinct drug cultures, each linked to distinctive markets. Mandrax usage, for example, was regionalized and concentrated in the mainly Coloured areas of the Cape Flats, in cosmopolitan Sea Point and in the predominantly Indian Phoenix area.<sup>771</sup>

Many of the prominent gang leaders and drug merchants in the Cape were Muslim, even if often only nominally.<sup>772</sup> Immigrant Nigerian and Moroccan Muslims played a role in the drug trade in Sea Point, especially with cocaine and heroin, and Moroccans were involved in attempting to enforce protection rackets in Diep River and Claremont. However, it was the drug trafficking by local Muslims that was deplored most by the Muslim establishment. As *Boorhaanol Islam* wrote in 1994, “The ultimate irony for Muslims though, in the prohibition of these social vices, is that their own brethren, as in drug trafficking, become its chief exponents.”<sup>773</sup>

Nigerian and Moroccan Muslims did not align themselves with the local Muslim gang leaders on the basis of a common religion. Muslim gang leaders also did not necessarily align themselves on the basis of being members of the Muslim community. For example, Igshaan Davids Shanie, Kadoemalah Madat and Karjeker Madat were aligned with the “26” prison gang, while the brothers Rashaad Staggie and Rashied Staggie, who took over the Hard Living Kids in the early 1980s, were aligned with the “28” prison gang.

Until 1994, the Americans and the Hard Livings were the two biggest gangs on the Cape Flats, with a monopoly on drug distribution but not on supply. During the 1994 election, the Americans were split, with some sections supporting the National Party (NP) and other sections supporting the African National Congress (ANC), whereas the Hard Livings supported the ANC. Support came in the form of paying for buses to rallies and ensuring peaceful campaigns by parties. The Firm, a cartel of drug dealers founded in 1992, regulated drug supply into the Cape Flats, and soon after 1994 the Hard Livings became part of the Firm.<sup>774</sup>

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<sup>771</sup> Ted Leggett, *Drugs and Crime in South Africa: A Study in Three Cities*, Institute for Security Studies Monograph No. 69 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, March 2002), Chapter 4; Paul Higdon, “International organized crime syndicates and international co-operation in combating organized crime” in Michael Hough and Anton du Plessis (eds.), *The Grim Reaper: Organised crime in the 1990s – Implications for South and Southern Africa* (Pretoria: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1999), pp. 16-25 on pp. 17-18; Andre Standing, *The threat of gangs and anti-gangs policy*, ISS Occasional Paper 116 at <http://www.iss.co.za/pub/papers/116/Paper116.htm>; Irvin Kinnes, *From urban street gangs to criminal enterprises: The changing face of gangs in the Western Cape*, ISS Monograph Series No. 48 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, June 2000), pp. 4-5, Crime Information Management System, *Organised Crime: Working Definitions* (Pretoria: SAPS, 1997), pp. 8-12 and Redpath, op. cit.

<sup>772</sup> Raashied Galant and Fahmi Gamielien (eds.), *Drugs, Gangs and Power: Exploring the PAGAD Phenomenon* (Cape Town: Claremont Mosque, 1996), p. 14.

<sup>773</sup> “New Challenges facing Muslims”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 4 (1994), pp. 2-3 on p. 2. See also “Violating the Sacred” (editorial), *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 33 no. 1 (1998), pp. 2-3.

<sup>774</sup> Kinnes, op. cit., pp. 222-25.

In areas such as Manenberg, with its 50 000 inhabitants, the Americans and Hard Livings were completely dominant. In some areas, law enforcement agencies periodically felt under siege from urban or rural groups and networks, rather than the other way round.<sup>775</sup> The police estimated that most of the men of the area used some form of drugs. Residents in such areas also had to deal with the high levels of murder, rape and drug trafficking associated with gang activities. Both the ANC and the NP tried to get gangs on their side for the 1994 elections, which reinforced the perceptions of many Muslims about links between gangs, the government, and the law enforcement agencies.<sup>776</sup>

Incidents of corruption and inefficiency seriously affected the capacity and legitimacy of the police. In fact, the gangs were often able to obtain information and services from members of several government departments. Some relatively senior policemen were on the payroll of some gangs. In addition, numerous gang leaders before 1994 had been informers at some stage. Senior police officers were forced to proceed cautiously against some gang leaders lest information about their past relationship might jeopardize their careers. They exploited friendship networks and the legacy of closing ranks at the top, plus NP control of the provincial department in this regard.<sup>777</sup>

#### *Community protection initiatives*

Neither the ANC nor the NP seemed capable of addressing the security concerns of many Muslims in the Western Cape during the initial period after 1994. Most of the Muslim groups appeared just as powerless to influence events. Thus, many people in the Western Cape were unhappy about the levels of crime and dissatisfied with the police's handling of the situation. Neither the big parties, nor particular Muslim groups close to the ruling ANC, nor other Muslim political groups seemed able to address the situation.

Since 1986, Muslims in Salt River, Bo-Kaap and Surrey Estate had formed community-based anti-drug committees. The committees in Salt River opted for non-collaboration with the police and rehabilitation, while the others chose cooperation with the police and other groups who were putting pressure on and apprehending drug dealers.<sup>778</sup> Some of these initiatives died, but after 1994 middle-class neighbourhood watches, as well as predominantly Muslim ones in the Bo-Kaap and Surrey Estate, became more active.

Some clerics also conducted anti-drug education campaigns from the mosques. In March 1995, Muslims from the Bo-Kaap Anti-Drug Coordinating Committee, with the support of prominent MJC leaders, marched to Parliament. They demanded to see the Minister of

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<sup>775</sup> Ibid.

<sup>776</sup> Franco Fracassi and Laura Evans, "Money can buy immunity", *Mail and Guardian*, 25-31 July 1997, p. 6 and Gustav Thiel, "Cape Town – from wine route to drug route", *Mail and Guardian*, 25-31 July 1997, p. 6.

<sup>777</sup> Wilfried Schärf, *Recommendations Relating to the Investigation of Organised Crime*, Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town, 2 June 1998, p. 6.

<sup>778</sup> A. Rashied Omar, "Police, Politics & Anti-Drug Strategies: From Salt River to Salt River" in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 45-51.

Justice, Dullah Omar, and said that the Quran and the unsafe situation in the streets prescribed that the death penalty should not be scrapped.<sup>779</sup> However, the MJC did not broaden this initiative. This resulted in examples of successful initiatives of community protection before 1994, yet something of a gap in this regard after 1994.

Vigilante groups became more prominent in South Africa after 1994. The Umfelandawonye vigilante group, which originated among Xhosas in the Eastern Cape before 1994, and Mapogo-a-Mathamaga, a black group founded in 1996 in the north west of the country, were among these groups.<sup>780</sup> The third prominent movement that emerged among Muslims in the Western Cape was People Against Gangsterism And Drugs, which later became known by its acronym PAGAD.

### **The emergence of PAGAD<sup>781</sup>**

#### *Small beginnings*

Different sources indicate variously May, November and December 1995 as dates of PAGAD's formation. Abeedah Roberts, a PAGAD co-founder, prominent organizer and long-time Qibla activist, claims that the idea to establish PAGAD was conceived during a discussion of six people about the damage of drugs to friends and family members, and the inaction of the authorities. The full name, People Against Gangsterism And Drugs, was coined by a teacher and spokesman throughout PAGAD's existence, Ebrahim Francis, but the acronym itself only emerged over time.<sup>782</sup> In a newsletter, the IUC, whose leadership was closest to the people who launched PAGAD, gives 30 November 1995 as the date of formation.<sup>783</sup>

In November 1995, five Muslims forced gang leader Rashid Staggie's car off the road, inflicted facial injuries upon him and shot him with a shotgun, riddling his car with bullets and almost killing him. This was in response to remarks by Staggie perceived as anti-Islamic. Staggie indicated that he wanted to repent, attended mosque prayers and

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<sup>779</sup> Fu'ad Rahman, "Muslims call for death penalty to remain", *Muslim Views*, March 1995, p. 1. See also two reports, namely "Crime Prevention" and "Rylands Estate Neighbourhood Watch" in *Muslim Views*, January 1995, pp. 12, 13.

<sup>780</sup> See <http://www.mapogo.co.za> and Makubetse Sekhonyane and Antoinette Louw, *Violent Justice: Vigilantism and the State's Response*, Institute for Security Studies, ISS Monograph 72 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2002).

<sup>781</sup> For good studies on PAGAD in general, see Henri Boshoff, Anneli Botha and Martin Schönteich, *Fear and the city: Urban terrorism in South Africa*, ISS Monograph 63 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, September 2001) at <http://www.iss.co.za>; Bill Dixon and Lisa-Marie Johns, "Gangs, PAGAD and the State: Vigilantism and Revenge Violence in the Western Cape," *Violence and Transition*, vol. 2 (May 2001) at <http://www.csvr.org.za/papers/papvtp2.htm>; Abdulkader Tayob, "Jihad against Drugs in Cape Town: A Discourse-Centred Analysis," *Social Dynamics*, vol. 22 no. 2 (1996), pp. 23-29 on p. 25; Galant and Gamielien, op. cit. and Keith Gottschalk, *Vigilantism the State: A Case Study of the Rise and Fall of PAGAD, 1996-2000*, ISS Paper 99 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2005).

<sup>782</sup> "Die aand toe ons gestig het", *Keur*, 21 November 1997, pp. 8-9 on p. 8.

<sup>783</sup> See "PAGAD Confronts 'Criminal' Justice system", *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 3; "The march must go on" (editorial comment), *Muslim Views*, August 1996, pp. 1, 4 on p. 4; Botha, "The Prime Suspects?", op. cit. The dates of December 1995 in Dixon and Johns, op. cit., and of March 1996 in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 9-10 seem incorrect.

asked for police protection against local residents who were now taking the law into their own hands.<sup>784</sup>

It is not clear from sources whether the attackers were part of PAGAD. However, in view of the later lynching of Staggie by PAGAD supporters, the targeting of Staggie, his complaint that it was a case of vigilantism, the fact that the attackers were Muslims and the proximity in time to the formation of PAGAD, the attackers could well have been linked to the emerging PAGAD.

Initially, PAGAD was a community movement with few structures, no logo or letterheads, with a collective leadership style. It held three house meetings in December 1995 and only appeared on Muslim community radio stations in 1996.<sup>785</sup> On 6 March 1996 it held a protest march to the offices of Justice Minister Dullah Omar and its first public meeting demanded government action against gangs. At the march the protesters chanted: “Who are we? We are people against gangsterism and drugs.”<sup>786</sup>

Two months after the first public meeting on 11 May 1996, thousands of people marched to Parliament to give the government an ultimatum to rid Cape Town of drugs and gangs within 60 days.<sup>787</sup> The main speakers at the march were Achmad Cassiem, Thafiek Najjaar and Ebrahim Gabriels, representing the most important bodies of Muslim clerics. At that stage, while PAGAD was overwhelmingly Muslim, Catholic priest Father Cleohessy from Tafelsig was also willing to act as a speaker at the march.<sup>788</sup>

Within six months during the gap left by political parties and other Muslim groups, PAGAD quickly grew into a broad community movement accepted by all major Muslim clerics. However, the acronym PAGAD was not used by the movement or Muslim radio and print media until the middle of 1996.

Initially, radio programmes and *Muslim Views* only referred to the full name, then also to PAGD. Only by July 1996 the PAGAD campaign promoted itself under the acronym “PAGAD” and also established a formal organizational structure.<sup>789</sup> This suggests that the repertoire of mobilization and propaganda was not only the fulfillment of a thought-out strategy, but also the result of responses to unfolding events.

### *The role of Qibla*

Qibla (Direction) was led by Achmad Cassiem who advocated a combination of class analysis, Black Consciousness and political Islam or Islamism. Qibla was formed in 1980 and was significantly inspired by the Islamic revolution in Iran. Cassiem was critical of

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<sup>784</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “Gangsters Ask Police for Help!”, *Muslim Views*, November 1995, p. 1.

<sup>785</sup> “PAGAD Confronts ‘Criminal’ Justice system”, *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 3.

<sup>786</sup> Raashied Galant and Fahmi Gamielien (eds.), *Drugs, Gangs, People’s Power: Exploring the PAGAD Phenomenon* (Claremont: Claremont Main Road Masjid, 1996), “Chronology”, pp. 9-10 and “PAGAD Confronts ‘Criminal’ Justice system”, *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 3.

<sup>787</sup> “PAGAD – how events unfolded”, *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10.

<sup>788</sup> “Drugs & Gangsterism: Government given 60-day ultimatum”, *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 2.

<sup>789</sup> See current affairs programs on Radio 786 on 8, 10, 12 May 1996, 15, 21 and 25 June 1996, and then on 9 July 1996.



the negotiated political settlement of the mid-1990s. He saw it as a pact between two elites at the expense of the liberation struggle and the oppressed masses. To him it was an entrenchment of the global and local unbeliever value systems of Zionist racism, apartheid, exploitative selfish capitalism and dehumanizing imperialism in the name of Christianity.<sup>790</sup>

Cassiem saw Islam as the dominant revolutionary force in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and was of the opinion that many Muslims had lost a correct understanding of Islam and its revolutionary heritage in Azania.<sup>791</sup> Muslims had to acquire the requisite skills for *jihad*.<sup>792</sup> "We are the ones who are, without fear of contradiction, the most fearless in the fight against oppression, for the veil between life and death does not exist for us."<sup>793</sup>

Qibla saw its mission as promoting the *ummah* or community of Muslim believers as an ideological community and presenting Islam as the major liberatory force to the oppressed masses, in the hope that the enlightened masses would then rise up against the oppressors.<sup>794</sup> A fully-fledged Islamic state in South Africa was to be achieved by uniting all the "oppressed" under the leadership of the Muslim minority.<sup>795</sup> This approach would have a significant influence on PAGAD leaders and the PAGAD discourses.

Qibla, who also participated in the armed struggle against white rule, rejected the 1994 negotiated settlement and participation in the election of 1994,<sup>796</sup> but its black ally, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), did participate, faring poorly. Qibla took over the Islamic Unity Convention (IUC), an umbrella movement of many small Muslim organizations, including some moderate ones, in 1995. The IUC, with Qibla as its driving force, became the rival of the MJC for Muslim community leadership.

Qibla leader Achmad Cassiem's approach with the Islamic Unity Convention apparently was to help create a broad front incorporating diverse interest groups, and to allow a cleric who was not a competitor to initially become the leader. Thus the entrenched position and greater organizational skill of Qibla members in the front organization was used to take over the leadership of an organization much broader than Qibla itself. The IUC used its alleged membership of hundreds of organizations to claim that it was widely

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<sup>790</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 225 and *Chairman's Address*, IUC Annual General Meeting, Athlone Technical College, 24 November 2000, p. 3.

<sup>791</sup> Achmad Cassiem, *Eid Message: The intellectual roots of the oppressed and Islam's triumph over apartheid* (Qibla: Athlone, 1992), pp. 14, 25.

<sup>792</sup> Achmad Cassiem, *Lecture on Interim Government* (video, 1991).

<sup>793</sup> Achmad Cassiem, *Anniversary of 16 June 1976* (video, undated).

<sup>794</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 40, 41 and 48.

<sup>795</sup> See for example Cassiem, *The Intellectual Roots of the Oppressed*, op. cit., read together with the *Summary of the IUC's Submission to the Constitutional Assembly*, 1995. For a good analysis of Qibla's thinking before 1994, see C.P. le Roux and Iqbal Jhazbay, "The Contemporary Path of Qibla Thought: a Hermeneutical Reflection," *Journal of Islamic Studies*, vol. 12 (1982), pp. 84-100. For a study of Qibla since 1994, see C.J.B. le Roux and H.W. Nel, "Radical Islamic Fundamentalism in South Africa: An Exploratory Study", *Journal for Contemporary History*, vol. 23 no. 2 (December 1998), pp. 1-24.

<sup>796</sup> "Achmad Cassiem, Qiblah: Muslims and the Elections," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 28 no. 4 (January 1994), pp. 29-32.

representative of the community. However, its annual general meeting in 2000 saw only delegates from 36 small organizations, often one-man organizations.<sup>797</sup>

In time, some critics of Qibla and PAGAD claimed that PAGAD was actually created by and secretly controlled by Qibla. Supporters of Qibla, the sub-group with the most organizational expertise and cohesion, were certainly involved in the establishment of the movement. They probably also utilized and influenced PAGAD's broad populist struggle against drugs and gangsterism.

On 29 February 1996, for example, a group of PAGAD supporters protesting the high levels of crime in the province invaded the residence of the Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar. For security reasons, he had to vacate the house. Qibla denied responsibility but some of its supporters were implicated. This was the first action by PAGAD to receive publicity in the national media.<sup>798</sup>

Qibla supporters were also involved in the formation of other structures. One was MAGO (Muslims Against Global Oppression), which held marches and placard protests against US policies in the Middle East or Muslim suffering in Chechnya, Bosnia and Kashmir. They fed on a broader sense of Muslims being under siege globally in Chechnya, Bosnia, Kashmir and Palestine.<sup>799</sup> Sometimes MAGO acted alone and sometimes Qibla pursued similar themes. For example, after the PAGAD march in May 1996 it used and strengthened the populist momentum by also holding a march protesting against Israel's actions in Lebanon.<sup>800</sup>

Another structure formed was MAIL (Muslims Against Illegitimate Leaders), which attacked the reputations and conduct of the Muslim clerics in the dominant cleric body, the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC). This tied in with the Qibla and IUC campaign to weaken the reputation and standing of the MJC.<sup>801</sup> MAIL would later join in preventing Ebrahim Rasool, the Muslim leader of the provincial ANC, from speaking at Muslim venues.<sup>802</sup>

Qibla is a secretive organisation and open sources do not have information about its structures and members. However, based on the conduct of its supporters, Qibla's strategy in PAGAD probably was to initiate or use mass organizations to reach people with the Qibla message. In addition, as in the case of MAGO, Qibla supporters also created several small organizations to spearhead various causes and to distance themselves from

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<sup>797</sup> Heinrich Matthee, "Ulama criticised at IUC meeting," *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 15.

<sup>798</sup> "Chronology", Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 9-12 on p. 9.

<sup>799</sup> See chapter 8, "Islam under Attack," *IUC News*, March 1995, p. 3, and the slogan used during the IUC March for Justice in Kashmir, Cape Town, 1 April 2000: "One oppressor, one bullet/in Bosnia/in India/in Kosovo/in Palestine/in South Africa".

<sup>800</sup> "Muslims March On Israeli Embassy", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 3.

<sup>801</sup> See for example Heinrich Matthee, "Ulama criticized at IUC meeting," *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 15. "Getting to know how Qualified our Sheikhs, Imams, Moulanas and Islamic scholars are," *IUC News*, March 1995 p. 6.

<sup>802</sup> Shamil Jeppie, "The struggle over gangs and drugs in 1998," *Annual Review of Islam in SA*, Issue no. 2 June 1999, pp. 24-26 on p. 26.

the consequences. Meanwhile, it continued to be active as an ideological thinktank and an organizational dynamo on the Muslim scene. However, at least at the beginning, it did not have full control over the heterogeneous PAGAD, nor over events.

### *The role of state intelligence agencies*

Some state officials have commented in private that the ANC-led state intelligence agencies had some links to the movement in its early phases, and that PAGAD later turned against its co-creator. Supporters of PAGAD or the IUC, on the other hand, have generally blamed the state intelligence services for infiltrating PAGAD and being responsible for much of the violence that was later linked to members of the movement.<sup>803</sup>

The leaders of the ruling tripartite alliance had the mindset and experience of an armed liberation movement, and personal and political interests may have supported a role in the formation of PAGAD at a time when the province was under opposition rule. For example, the provincial ANC leader was Dullah Omar, also the minister of justice and intelligence, and a well-known figure in the local Muslim community. Initially, the provincial justice department was under ANC political control and the police under NNP political control. The open nature of the PAGAD movement at the beginning would also have enabled infiltration by state agents.

However, available sources do not provide clear evidence of the possible role of state intelligence and the extent of such a role during the formation of PAGAD. This remains an unanswered question for now. But evidence does exist of at least some infiltration, assistance in activities and perhaps even the provocation of some members of PAGAD by agents linked to the police and National Intelligence Agency, including Ayob Mungalee, PAGAD's Gauteng coordinator, Farouk Jaffer, a founding member, Rushdien Abrahams, Mansoor Manuel and Deon Mostert.<sup>804</sup>

### **PAGAD's different phases and approaches**

#### *Pressure on gangs and the killing of Rashid Staggie*

The dynamics of PAGAD can be described as a series of different waves which came to the fore at different times and with varying force, sometimes separately and sometimes in combination. These waves included the formation of a heterogeneous movement appealing to different audiences, as well as internal altercations; popular mobilization and pressure, and intimidation and violence by covert cells.

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<sup>803</sup> Interview with Ganief Hendricks, Bellville, 21 November 2000.

<sup>804</sup> "Bail twist in PAGAD hearing", *Cape Times*, 23 February 1999, p. 1; "PAGAD: Government agents are bombers", *Cape Times*, 24 February 1999, p. 2; "Uncertainty remains over Mostert claims", *Cape Times*, 25 August 2000, p. 3; "Mostert passed polygraph test", *Mail and Guardian*, 17-22 December 1999, p. 5; "Back to detention without trial?", *Mail and Guardian*, 15-21 September 2000, p. 16.

During the 1990s, a geographical and market division of criminal business occurred under the leadership of the Firm in the Western Cape. From 1995 criminal business on the Cape Flats occurred in relative calm. By 1996, gang leaders of the Hard Livings had won enough community support through patronage to become seemingly invincible, intimidating the broader population on the Flats almost at will.<sup>805</sup> This was to change, especially from July 1996 onwards, when both the rhetoric and actions of PAGAD against gang leaders increased the pressure on them.

From within the initially fluid context of several networks, the first structures that emerged in July 1996 were led by Nadthmie Edries, Farouk Jaffer and a former drug addict and son of a prominent businessman, Ali Parker. PAGAD structures were established in areas in the Cape Flats, but in time the organisation also attracted support in more distant areas such as Paarl, Stellenbosch and the Strand.<sup>806</sup>

By July 1996, *Muslim Views* was quoting Farouk Jaffer, a PAGAD leader, who said a full scale war was looming between gangsters and vigilantes. PAGAD speakers stated that most drug dealers were prominent Muslims who had been hiding behind their legal businesses in order to import drugs from India and elsewhere.

Druglords were described as killers of the youth who did not have the right to exist in the community, and the slogan “Kill the merchant” emerged. Later, “One merchant, one bullet. One gangster, one bullet” would become a slogan used by Abdussalaam Ebrahim, a prominent PAGAD leader. Both slogans had their roots in slogans originally used by the ANC or PAC during the struggle against white rule.<sup>807</sup>

On 9 July 1996 during a radio interview with members of PAGAD, Ebrahim distinguished between violence used to oppress people or used by gangsters and druglords, and force used to eradicate injustice or violence. Marches by often-masked participants to the houses of drug dealers were conducted, and ultimatums were given to stop their drug trafficking or face the consequences.

The first such march occurred on 11 July 1996 or 18 July 1996.<sup>808</sup> This form of pressure became a bi-weekly event in front of the homes of suspected drug leaders.<sup>809</sup> PAGAD’s marches to the houses of drug merchants attracted growing publicity. There were 54 such marches between August and December 1996. Thereafter, fewer were held.<sup>810</sup> One of these confrontational marches led to a key event in the history of PAGAD.

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<sup>805</sup> Kinnes, op. cit., pp. 222-25.

<sup>806</sup> “Drug dealers targeted by community”, *Muslim Views*, July 1996, p. 1 and Botha, “The Prime Suspects?”, op. cit., pp. 1-2.

<sup>807</sup> “Drug dealers targeted by community”, *Muslim Views*, July 1996, p. 1. These slogans were probably inspired by the slogan that Peter Mokaba, leader of the ANC Youth League, made famous: “Kill the Boer, kill the farmer”, and the PAC slogan “One settler, one bullet.” See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2050188.stm> and [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan\\_African\\_Congress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pan_African_Congress)

<sup>808</sup> “PAGAD – how events unfolded”, *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10 indicates 11 July 1996 and Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 10 states 18 July 1996.

<sup>809</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>810</sup> Botha, “The prime suspects?”, op. cit.

On 4 August 1996, Rashaad Staggie, one of the co-leaders of the Hard Livings gang, tried to confront PAGAD marchers by driving his luxury 4x4 vehicle through a police cordon between the marchers and the Staggie headquarters. He was pulled from the car by PAGAD supporters and seriously wounded by pistol shots. Thereafter his body was doused with petrol and set alight by some of the marchers. The TV pictures of the once-feared gang leader screaming, running and trying to extinguish the flames destroyed the widespread image of these gang leaders' invincibility. They also catapulted PAGAD into the national and international limelight.

After Staggie's killing, on 11 August 1996, PAGAD held a big rally of almost 10 000 people at Vygieskraal. Even Sh. Nazeem Mohamed, the president of the MJC, committed himself to the support of PAGAD's ideals, although the MJC had distanced itself from the killing and reserved the right to criticize the actions and methods of PAGAD whenever it did not conform to the *Shariah*.<sup>811</sup>

In the aftermath of the Staggie killing, other movements like PACAD (People Against Crime and Drugs) and PADAV (People against Drugs and Violence) also emerged in Gauteng and the Eastern Cape respectively. However, unsupported by local socio-political dynamics, they never really got off the ground.

By this stage, PAGAD in the Western Cape had developed into a broad front of several groups.<sup>812</sup> PAGAD incorporated different neighbourhood watches and anti-drug, anti-crime community initiatives, unrelated to those of the 1980s but similar in some ways. PAGAD broadly included several tendencies and approaches. A widespread anti-drug focus emerged in three directions - first, education, rehabilitation and the creation of alternative entertainment for young people; second, anti-drug popular mobilization and pressure on gangs, druglords and state agencies; and third, anti-drug violence against gangsters and druglords.

Among some supporters of PAGAD, especially those from Qibla, a political focus on the non-Islamic state developed in three directions - first, education about Islamic values, the discrepancy between the constitution and Islamic values, and the limited legitimacy of the state; second, popular mobilization and pressure against state agencies; and third, violence against state structures and those who collaborated with them. These six approaches existed throughout the period of discussion. However, until September 1996, the emphasis on anti-drug popular mobilization and pressure dominated.

#### *PAGAD's popular support*

The perceived inefficiency of the authorities in combating violent crime, drug trafficking and gang rule in certain areas was one of the major reasons for the establishment of

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<sup>811</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 33, 42 and "MJC Policy: Crime and substance abuse", *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1996, p. 3.

<sup>812</sup> Boshoff, Botha en Schoenteich, *Fear in the City*, op. cit.

PAGAD.<sup>813</sup> This inefficiency was sometimes also linked to police corruption. For example, at PAGAD's public march in May 1996, Ebrahim Francis, acting as a spokesman, had claimed that a number of policemen were involved in the drug trade.<sup>814</sup>

Of those surveyed in a Cape Flats survey in early September 1996, 29% thought that the police could be trusted to do what is right most of the time, while 44% thought they could be trusted "some of the time". Seventy five percent thought some police members were involved in corruption and 55% disapproved or strongly disapproved of the way the SAPS had performed over the previous year.<sup>815</sup> In an address to religious leaders in Cape Town on August 29, the Minister of Safety and Security, Sydney Mufamadi, acknowledged that there was enough evidence that police corruption was the core reason for the failure to combat crime by gangs in the Western Cape.<sup>816</sup>

PAGAD evoked much popular support among all population groups after the 1996 Staggie killing, and especially among Muslims. A survey by Research Surveys, SA's biggest consumer research company at the end of 1996 and the beginning of 1997, indicated that 52% of Capetonians of all age, racial and income groups were in favour of PAGAD's actions, while 49% believed that the police were biased and appeared to side more with the gangsters than with PAGAD.<sup>817</sup>

Surveys showed that support varied along religious, ethnic and class lines. 64% of Muslims supported PAGAD, compared to only 18% of Christians. Forty nine percent of Muslims thought it represented the community and 81% thought that PAGAD was effective, compared to 50% of Christians. Favorable attitudes towards PAGAD increased steadily within income and professional occupation categories, while men consistently held more favourable attitudes to PAGAD than women. Forty four percent of professionals supported it, compared to 33% blue-collar workers.<sup>818</sup>

#### *A comparison with other community protection initiatives*

Several Muslim clerics were involved in anti-drug campaigns at mosques before PAGAD. PAGAD added an initially populist anti-gangster dimension.<sup>819</sup> There were other Neighbourhood Watches within which Muslims continued to play an important role. The relations between the Neighborhood Watches, PAGAD and the SAPS fluctuated.

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<sup>813</sup> "Die aand toe ons gestig het", *Keur*, 21 November 1997, pp. 8-9 on p. 8.

<sup>814</sup> "Drugs & Gangsterism: Government given 60-day ultimatum", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 2.

<sup>815</sup> Jennifer Christie, "Safety At Any Cost: Community Perceptions of PAGAD", *Indicator South Africa*, no. 9 (Winter 1997), pp. 27-32 and "Crime Focus", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 15.

<sup>816</sup> A. Rashied Omar, "Police, Politics & Anti-Drug Strategies: From Salt River to Salt River" in Galant and Gamielidien, op. cit., pp. 45-51 on pp. 48-49.

<sup>817</sup> "Incompetent Police made PAGAD a necessity", *Muslim Views*, February 1997, p. 3.

<sup>818</sup> Jennifer Christie, "Safety At Any Cost: Community Perceptions of PAGAD," *Indicator South Africa*, no. 9 (Winter 1997), pp. 27-32 on pp. 31-32.

<sup>819</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, 23 February 2000, MJC HQ, Athlone and with Yagyah Adams, 3 March 2000, Athlone.

PAGAD G-Force members infiltrated some neighbourhood watches, for example in Grassy Park, Lotus River, Hanover Park and Lansdowne. Confrontation between the SAPS task force focusing on PAGAD and a Mitchells Plain neighbourhood watch led to the watches suspending their services in September 1997.<sup>820</sup> On the other hand, after leaving PAGAD and failing to gain much support for his registered Section 21 company PAGAD, Farouk Jaffer became involved with the Athlone Neighbourhood Security Service, which cooperated with the police.<sup>821</sup>

The Bo-Kaap Neighbourhood Watch, which cooperated with the ANC-dominated civic association and local SAPS, had existed since 1988. During incidents in the area, the SAPS would occasionally phone the Neighbourhood Watch, whose members would then carry out civilian arrests. A few younger members left for PAGAD, while PAGAD's activities resulted in some Watch members becoming afraid and leaving as well.<sup>822</sup>

Shaykh Irfaan Hendriks of Surrey Estate led his Neighbourhood Watch so effectively that it dominated the area, sometimes using assistance from the Bo-Kaap Neighbourhood Watch. When PAGAD's popularity grew, he started to distance himself from them because of the Qibla elements in PAGAD. Some of his supporters did not follow his lead, maintaining that the antidrug campaign was an important common denominator. This did put pressure on local PAGAD structures to stick to an anti-drug agenda instead of following a broader political one, lest they lose the support of the imam's followers. Still, PAGAD members did not support his initiative and insulted him in public on at least one occasion in November 2000.<sup>823</sup>

When the Firm and other groups from the urban Cape tried to gain a foothold in Vanrhynsdorp, Citrusdal and Bredasdorp in 1996, members of the local community, including local political leaders and drug dealers, physically attacked and virtually halted their expansion. On August 9, 1996, for example, a crowd led by a local non-Muslim ANC councillor and public prosecutor, Jonas White, removed four alleged drug dealers from Clanwilliam. This action in a rural town had no direct links to PAGAD, but also indicated the widespread lack of faith in the ability of the legal system to address gangsterism.<sup>824</sup>

Later in 1996, PAGAD was called in to provide some advice in Clanwilliam.<sup>825</sup> The main druglord in the George-Pacaltsdorp-Conville area allegedly survived an attack by PAGAD in 1997.<sup>826</sup> Mostly, however, PAGAD played no significant role in these events

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<sup>820</sup> "Watch Patrol 'down tools' ", *Ad-Da'wah*, October 1997, p. 3.

<sup>821</sup> "Athlone Neighbourhood S.S.", *Ad-Da'wah*, June 1998, p. 12.

<sup>822</sup> Interview with Imam Ishmail Davids, 15 November 2000, Bo-Kaap.

<sup>823</sup> Interview with Imam Ishmail Davids, 15 November 2000, Bo-Kaap and Abdulkader Tayob, "Islamism & PAGAD: Finding the Connection" in Galant and Gamielidien, op. cit., pp. 29-36 on pp. 33-34.

<sup>824</sup> "PAGAD – how events unfolded", *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10. The author was a magistrate in Clanwilliam at the time and had conversations with White about these events.

<sup>825</sup> "Clanwilliam pays with blood to rid town of drug dealers and gangsters", *Muslim Views*, October 1996, p. 17.

<sup>826</sup> Redpath, op. cit.

in the overwhelmingly Christian Coloured communities. Christianity also did not form a symbolic resource during mobilization.

Thus, PAGAD did not have a monopoly on anti-drug or anti-gangster initiatives or on vigilante action in the Western Cape. However, its example may have influenced other anti-drug or anti-gangster initiatives. It did not explicitly link up with previous activities of vigilantism in the history of the heterogeneous Coloured community, but it became the broadest, most active and most enduring vigilante movement in the region.

### *Realignment and internal contestation*

The police often did not appear to act decisively against PAGAD before the Staggie killing. Initially, there were negotiations between the ANC national government and PAGAD on its grievances. When Minister Omar received the memorandum in May 1996, he acknowledged that there was a problem and that the government welcomed any mass action of this nature.<sup>827</sup> He later met with PAGAD leaders in June 1996 to discuss their demands.<sup>828</sup>

After the Staggie killing, the ANC national government responded quickly. Minister Omar met with attorneys-general to request they give priority to serious crimes, especially drug trafficking and gang-related offences.<sup>829</sup> On 10 August 1996, PAGAD leaders met National Police Commissioner George Fivaz to discuss cooperation between the police and PAGAD.<sup>830</sup> However, the government saw a challenge to its authority, and police arrested PAGAD leader Nathmie Edries at his home, later charging him with sedition, but eventually dropping the charges.<sup>831</sup>

After Staggie's killing, gangsters threatened to act against PAGAD marchers. One marcher was ambushed and killed by four gangsters on 7 August 1996 after he was identified during a march.<sup>832</sup> Rumours circulating in the week of Staggie's death consisted of bomb threats to all mosques and Muslim schools, and this led to the closure of all Muslim schools in Cape Town for a week and a more hardline approach by PAGAD.<sup>833</sup> Gangsters wore balaclavas to prevent their identification while G-Force members would often resort to wearing chequered scarves during public operations to prevent their identification. The scarves also linked G-Force members to the struggles of Muslims elsewhere.<sup>834</sup>

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<sup>827</sup> "Drugs & Gangsterism: Government given 60-day ultimatum", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 2.

<sup>828</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>829</sup> "Dullah Omar flexes legal muscle in bid to combat crime", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 17.

<sup>830</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>831</sup> "PAGAD – how events unfolded", *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10. Days later he was freed again and the charges against him provisionally dropped. "PAGAD leader to sue State", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 11.

<sup>832</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp.10-11.

<sup>833</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 42.

<sup>834</sup> Jeppie, "Introduction" in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 16 and Manjra, "Battle Plans" in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 41.



After the PAGAD mass meeting of 11 August 1996, a peaceful march by thousands of people through Rylands, Penlyn and Mountview was disrupted by the police. Teargas, birdshot and stun grenades were used to disperse the crowd when it entered Hanover Park. Simultaneously, a march of hundreds of gang members from Manenberg to Valhalla Park to demand police protection and space for their activities from the police continued uninterrupted. This difference in police conduct became an issue among PAGAD supporters, who saw in this a police bias toward and secret support of gangsters.<sup>835</sup>

Both the gangs and PAGAD were developing organizations, changing and adapting their methods and approaches and interacting with each other as events unfolded. During September 1996 gangsters belonging to the Firm formed the Community Outreach Program (CORE), claiming that they were rehabilitated and were important roleplayers for the upliftment of the community. At the same time, the threat posed by PAGAD meant that gangs like the Americans and Sexy Boys, who previously competed with the Firm, joined this cooperative arrangement.<sup>836</sup>

In response to events, PAGAD also broadened the scope of its actions. It cooperated with environmentalist groups and other Muslims in a mass protest against development at Oudekraal, on the slopes of Table Mountain, near the shrine of Tuan Sulaiman Nurul Mubeen, one of the early pioneers of Islam at the Cape. Ali Parker and Farouk Jaffer of PAGAD spoke at the first meeting and the later well-attended public protest meeting, which was broadcast on Radio 786.<sup>837</sup>

Coinciding with the growing influence of Qibla in PAGAD, PAGAD also broadened the basis of its protest. The message that the constitutional order itself had “ungodly” clauses in opposition to the wishes of the majority of people became more prominent in PAGAD statements. Pornography, gay rights, abortion, the scrapping of the death penalty and the removal of God’s name from the Constitution were among issues rankling PAGAD supporters.<sup>838</sup>

The weakening of the existing leadership by state actions, the police’s apparent bias against PAGAD and the gangs’ actions of consolidation and fighting back provided opportunities and motivation to the militant faction of PAGAD. By September 1996, PAGAD was split by an apparent power struggle between Parker, Edries and Jaffer on the one hand, and the more militant elements in PAGAD on the other. Parker alleged that Qibla elements were threatening his life, controlling PAGAD, using extortion against Muslim businessmen to raise funds, and were trying to overthrow the government.

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<sup>835</sup> “The march must go on”, *Muslim Views*, August 1996, pp. 1, 4, “PAGAD – how events unfolded”, *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10 and Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 11.

<sup>836</sup> Wilfried Schärf, “Organized Crime Comes of Age: During Transition to Democracy” in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 52-60 on p. 56 and Shuaib Manjra, “Battle Plans in the PAGAD Struggle: Political Fascism vs. Democracy” in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 37-44 on p. 43.

<sup>837</sup> “1000s oppose desecration of shrines and the environment” and “Mazaar Crisis: Monumental No Vote: Big thumbs down for Oudekraal Development”, *Muslim Views*, September 1996, pp. 1 and 12 respectively, and Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>838</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “PAGAD: It is not only drug trafficking”, *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 11.

The first group of leaders was eventually suspended from PAGAD. Those PAGAD members who sought to co-operate with the police in crime prevention became less and less influential, while the faction in favour of vigilantism coalesced under the leadership, first of Aslam Toefy, and then under that of Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim. Negotiations with the state structures eventually broke down.<sup>839</sup>

### *Mobilization and violent pressure*

After PAGAD split and began to pursue a more independent role from state structures, at the same time it did not discard the popular mobilization and pressure approach. After the split, this also became a method to show which faction represented PAGAD. The attendance of 5000 people at a march in Strand of the new PAGAD leaders, compared to attendance of 180 at a march in Kensington under the leadership of Parker, showed that the old leadership no longer enjoyed very much support.<sup>840</sup>

PAGAD promoted its anti-drug initiative outside the Cape Flats on 3 November 1996, when it held a family day rally at the Waterfront. As requested by the police, PAGAD went unarmed to the rally. Speakers said they wanted the world to know there was a drug problem in SA, that the police were not interested in solving this problem, and that the government used the police to suppress people. Batons and rubber bullets were used to disperse the crowd. In the process, 20 PAGAD supporters, including three leading figures, were arrested, and Achmat Najaar, the brother of Sh. Thafiek Najaar of the Islamic Council of SA, was killed by a gunshot.

Thousands of people attended Najaar's funeral. The proceedings included a 21-gun salute by PAGAD's G-Force. Radio 786 broadcast the funeral proceedings live. A new ritual of honoring those who fell or were incarcerated during the struggle as Muslim martyrs became widely publicised. A few days later Minister Omar established an independent commission of inquiry into Najaar's death.<sup>841</sup> At a Waterfront rally two weeks later, Toefy reiterated that the goal was to inform tourists of the crime and drug problem and that this scourge made it impossible to enjoy the fruits of liberation.<sup>842</sup>

During the PAGAD National Conference in Port Elizabeth on 7 December 1996, PAGAD both expanded and tightened its organization. PAGAD formed a national structure known as PAGAD United in December 1996 with Abdussalaam Ebrahim as chairman. PAGAD Western Cape became involved in similar independent structures and eventually controlled them. In December 1996, Parker, Jaffer and Sh. Moerat also registered a company PAGAD, but after being confronted about this in the Muir Street mosque in January 1997, Sh. Moerat resigned from it.<sup>843</sup>

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<sup>839</sup> See PAGAD, "Memorandum," *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 11 and Dixon and Johns, op. cit.

<sup>840</sup> Willem Breytenbach and Heindrich Wyngaard, "Optog in Strand wys daar is net een PAGAD", *Die Burger*, 14 October 1996.

<sup>841</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>842</sup> "New S. Africa, Same Old Police", *Muslim Views*, November 1996, p. 1.

<sup>843</sup> "Chronology of Conspiracy against IUC", *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 12.

PAGAD actions evoked criticism from several Muslim intellectuals, led by ANC supporters Ebrahim Moosa and Farid Esack, who knew many of the main PAGAD protagonists well. They published various opinion articles critical of PAGAD, the IUC and Radio 786 in the mainstream press. Moosa also coordinated a press statement expressing “fears at PAGAD’s militancy and intolerance as a threat to public order”, which was endorsed by Esack and other intellectuals and *ulama*, including Abdulkader Tayob, Shamiel Jeppie, Sh. Moegamat Moerat and Ebrahim Rasool of the ANC.<sup>844</sup>

However, at this stage and during at least the first quarter of 1997, PAGAD still enjoyed considerable public support. PAGAD’s open air Eid mass prayer in Crawford in February 1997 was attended by thousands of people and a mass demonstration of thousands of participants was held in Stellenbosch in March 1997.<sup>845</sup>

In addition, PAGAD launched a drugs awareness campaign at schools on the Cape Flats. It also targeted the Olympic Bid Company, accusing it of being in cahoots with gangsters and drug dealers. PAGAD called for the resignation of top Olympic Bid officials, a vote of no confidence in the police and justice system, and a boycott of big companies that supported the bid.<sup>846</sup> These were all activities aimed at drawing or strengthening public support.

Simultaneously, PAGAD’s activities also evoked gang violence against PAGAD and its leaders. Members of CORE, the group formed by so-called repenting gangsters that tried to influence public opinion in its favor, violently broke up one drug awareness program organized by PAGAD’s social welfare department. Led by gang leaders Rashied Staggie and Ernest Lapepa, a group of forty supporters armed with knives, machetes and guns attacked those present, including many women and children. Two members of PAGAD were shot and Abdussalaam Ebrahim was severely beaten in the face. Police nearby apparently did not help, which also did not enhance the police’s reputation among PAGAD members.<sup>847</sup>

During a march on a supermarket to hand over a memorandum to an alleged drug dealer, PAGAD commander Aslam Toefy was wounded in the leg and a police reservist who formed part of a barricade was killed.<sup>848</sup> In July 1997, national secretary Sharief Khan was gunned down by an ex-member.<sup>849</sup>

By August 1997, PAGAD leader Aslam Toefy and Minister Dullah Omar claimed that a third force was instigating the increasing violence in the Peninsula. PAGAD claimed that this group was trying to make the country ungovernable so that it could present itself as the saviours during the 1999 elections.<sup>850</sup>

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<sup>844</sup> “Chronology of Conspiracy against IUC”, *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 12.

<sup>845</sup> Mogamat Toffar, “PAGAD Marches On...”, *Muslim Views*, March 1997, p. 19.

<sup>846</sup> “‘Gangster Olympics’?”, *Muslim Views*, May 1997, p. 8.

<sup>847</sup> Mogamat Toffar, “CORE attacks PAGAD women, children”, *Muslim Views*, April 2004, p. 10.

<sup>848</sup> “PAGAD commander wounded in Maritzburg”, *Muslim Views*, June 1997, p. 2.

<sup>849</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “Shariff Khan shot dead”, *Muslim Views*, July 1997, p. 19.

<sup>850</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “Violence in townships – ‘Third Force suspected’”, *Muslim Views*, August 1997, p. 3.

### *The shift to offensive violence*

Initially, violent rhetoric and even violent actions against gangsters and druglords occurred, but the emphasis on anti-drug popular mobilization and pressure dominated PAGAD activities. Under the leadership of Toefy and Ebrahim, popular mobilization and pressure on gangs, druglords and state agencies remained important, but the focus shifted to violence against gangsters and druglords.

From the beginning, some PAGAD supporters, especially Qibla members, emphasized non-collaboration with the police. Others were willing to cooperate with the police to some extent, like Parker and Jaffer. Under the leadership of Toefy and Ebrahim, non-collaboration with the police became the dominant approach, although some supporters still collaborated with the police.<sup>851</sup>

PAGAD is often described as a vigilante group, people who took the law into their own hands and acted against criminals. Many PAGAD supporters argued that PAGAD members were implementing Muslim law, which coincided with some aspects of national law. The choice for vigilantism was in any case seen by many analysts in the security community as the unfolding of a long-term conspiratorial Qibla strategy to radicalize PAGAD with Islamism and take it over to pursue an Islamic dispensation in the Western Cape.<sup>852</sup>

A minority view declared that the choice for vigilantism was the contingent outcome of several interacting factors.<sup>853</sup> In this view, Qibla's organizational expertise and networks simply won out against the others. The change of leadership also led to a more disciplined organization, since the particular leaders were accustomed to such an approach and had to respond to increased threats from gangsters and police weakness.

The leading element in PAGAD at the time was Qibla-related. Qibla's main thinker, Achmad Cassiem, promoted a discourse that justified the use of violence, and he had a record of promoting polarization and extolling political violence. After his imprisonment for involvement in guerilla activities before 1994, Cassiem followed a cautious and subtle approach, so that his actions could seldom be directly linked to him or could plausibly be denied. The possibility cannot be excluded that he chose a long-term strategy of radicalization and polarization, by way of mass mobilization if possible, and with violence as a fall-back option.

There is no indication that Abdussalaam Ebrahim, probably a Qibla supporter, substantially differed from Cassiem on issues of ideology. His rhetoric and ideology, discussed below, closely followed that of Cassiem. It is therefore suggested that ideological radicalization was followed as a longterm strategy, and that events and the interaction with gangsters and police meant that violence, instead of mass mobilization

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<sup>851</sup> Boshoff, Botha and Schoenteich, *Fear in the City*, op. cit.

<sup>852</sup> Ibid.

<sup>853</sup> Dixon and Johns, op. cit.

and pressure, became the best approach in the view of the most powerful sections of the PAGAD movement.

## **PAGAD as an organization**

### *Ideology*

Initially, PAGAD's ideology reflected the different approaches and groups in the movement, with its message ranging from one of rehabilitation and strengthening of the authorities to a jihad against drugs and even obtaining the aid of Hezbollah in the fight against gangsterism. When Ebrahim and Toefy became the leaders, a more coherent vision was formulated and expressed in speeches and documents of the movement.

From the beginning, elements of this vision were expressed by Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim and his brother Abdurrazak Ebrahim. Abdurrazak Ebrahim presented discussion programs and programs on the Quran on Radio 786 and for some time operated as the anonymous ideologue of PAGAD.<sup>854</sup> Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim, while ideologically less coherent, was considered to be a good orator and organizer.

The main themes of PAGAD ideology were the promotion of family and community values, Islam, the fight against gangs and drugs, the politicization of the fight against criminals and the criminalization of religious and political opponents. The PAGAD Disciplinary Code mentioned that its vision was "To establish a society free from Gangsterism and harmful Drugs in a just and moral social order." Its first aim was "to propagate the eradication of drugs and gangsterism from society, in accordance with the divine will of The Creator." (art. 3 a). It referred to the "ideas of family values and Humanity for God" (art. 7 c). Clearly, the movement was not seen as a secular one.

PAGAD often denied being an Islamic movement. According to some estimates, only 2% of PAGAD members prayed regularly.<sup>855</sup> Nevertheless Islamic festivals and discourses were prominent from the beginning. At a mass Eid vow at Rylands sports stadium on 8 January 2000, PAGAD legal adviser Cassiem Parker asked for a united front against the forces of *Kufr* (unbelief). Prisoners were referred to as brothers and martyrs on Radio 786.<sup>856</sup>

PAGAD's meetings were held in mosques and its spiritual adviser, Hafiz Abdulrazaq Ebrahim, was given the title of *amir* (commander), a title unknown among Muslim clerics in South Africa and linked to Islamist discourses. There were specific Muslim prayers at meetings, and during the G-Force trials in 2000, the accused wore white robes and Abdussalaam Ebrahim came to court holding copies of the Quran. Appeals for legal funds over Radio 786 were linked to Ramadaan. Cassiem Parker declared that "Allah will hasten towards you if you contribute."<sup>857</sup>

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<sup>854</sup> "Programme", Tuesday 9 July 1996, Radio 786.

<sup>855</sup> Dr. Faried Esack, lecture, 3 December 2000, Parliament of World Religions, Cape Town.

<sup>856</sup> Radio 786, 8 January 2000.

<sup>857</sup> Radio 786, 6 January 2000.

Still, PAGAD retained some of its support from the public and continued a number of initiatives related to the upliftment of the community. PAGAD continued to present itself as a community organization first, rather than a Muslim organization. A report in *Al-Miftah* in 1999 still stressed its drug rehabilitation and welfare activities,<sup>858</sup> and in 2000 its national secretary Abiedah Roberts still stressed that it was an anti-crime organization. “Tell the gangsters we are not afraid of them and will put them in hell.”<sup>859</sup>

Simultaneously, however, it also collected *zakah* and had an Eid ul Fitr bulletin in 1999, in which it called upon the destitute to strengthen their faith in Allah who was the best of providers.<sup>860</sup> Ebrahim said in a speech before a closed circle in 1999 that druglords, as part of their penance, had to contribute money to uplift the affected communities.<sup>861</sup>

PAGAD discourses politicized the fight against criminals and criminalized political and religious opponents. This was in line with the works of Achmat Cassiem of Qibla, who argued that since apartheid was declared a crime against humanity, the apartheid state represented organized crime.<sup>862</sup> Since the ANC government accepted structures from the apartheid era and did not fight against crime groups and druglords, it was also complicit in crime.

At least at the beginning, Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim denied that Qibla prescribed to PAGAD, describing PAGAD as a movement of practical believers, open to Christians too. “PAGAD has only one mission: to wipe out all drug traffickers and all gangs.”<sup>863</sup> However, the criminalization of political and religious opponents would soon form part of Ebrahim’s discourse.

Already in a speech at the City Park Stadium in Crawford during Eid-ul-Fitr in February 1997, Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim extended the fight against gang leaders to a fight against ANC politicians and Muslim religious leaders who opposed PAGAD. According to him there were political leaders who usurped power from the people and have victimized and terrorized people, all in the name of democracy. He referred to them as political gangsters. According to him, there were also imams who committed various misdeeds and promoted disunity, and he referred to them as religious gangsters.<sup>864</sup>

In his keynote address at the PAGAD national conference in Woodstock on 7-8 August 1999, Ebrahim emphasized that PAGAD’s campaign was “based on the foundation of the

<sup>858</sup> “PAGAD: the untold side”, *Al-Miftah*, March/April 1999, p. 10.

<sup>859</sup> “Arrests after PAGAD shoot-out”, *Cape Times*, 22 May 2000, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>860</sup> “Global solidarity the essence of Eid messages”, *Muslim Views*, January 1999, p. 10.

<sup>861</sup> A transcript of a speech on International Drugs Awareness Day 1999 says: “Those who have been dealing in drugs in the community and was destroying this community, that have created monsters out of loving children, they will have to contribute all the blood money that they have made to this society, back to the families who have suffered because of evil deeds.”

<sup>862</sup> “Chairman’s Address”, *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1999, pp. 7, 15.

<sup>863</sup> Quoted in “Vlakte van Vrees”, *Keur*, 21 November 1997, pp. 6-7 on p. 6.

<sup>864</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “PAGAD National Conference starting today (21-23 March)”, *Muslim Views*, March/April 1997, p. 3.

Divine Will of the Creator...When we talk about gangsterism we include political gangsters, religious gangsters, economic gangsters and any person or persons who oppress human beings – these fall under the category of gangsterism.”<sup>865</sup>

At the PAGAD conference in August 1998, a statement was made about the existing leadership: “Mosques, churches, synagogues and other religious institutions that are supposed to give spiritual, moral, political, economic and social guidance, are busy preaching issues that do not motivate people to physically challenge the evil status quo that exists. We need to revolutionise our religious institutions so that from these institutions people will be motivated and activated to physically act to save communities, societies, countries and the world against gangsterism; drugs; crime; violence; deceit; prostitution; lesbianism; homosexuality; pornography; gambling; imbalance of wealth; oppression; malnutrition and destruction.”<sup>866</sup>

Ebrahim turned the fight against gangsterism into a fight against a "Satanist" government that allows drugs, gangsterism and other perceived vices to flourish under its new constitution, while being too corrupt to fight against crime. Islamic and local themes were mixed. The struggle against American globalisation was also articulated as a struggle against the "Americans" gang of the Cape Flats, whose Muslim leaders represented the distortion awaiting Islam if globalisation continued, and the government whose security agencies cooperated with the CIA, Mossad and MI6.<sup>867</sup>

Ebrahim also legitimized the use of violence. He promised to eradicate gangsterism and drugs “by any means necessary” from society, and called on Muslims to “prepare themselves with steeds of war against the enemies of Allah (SWT), the enemy of the Muslims and the oppressed people.”<sup>868</sup> The linking of the struggle of Muslims and oppressed people reflected themes in the discourse of Qibla and Achmad Cassiem.

In a speech by Ebrahim on International Drug Awareness day in 1999 he explicitly called for PAGAD to “prepare ourselves with steeds of war to strike terror in the hearts of the enemy of Allah”, a theme already present in the speech mentioned above. He continued that it was time to strike fear in the hearts of the drug dealers, the gangsters, the economic gangsters and the religious gangsters. He repeated a slogan widely used in his speeches: “One merchant, one bullet” and “One gangster, one bullet”.<sup>869</sup> The martial theme was combined with that of Islamic martyrs. PAGAD held Martyr’s Days, honoring fallen members like Shariff Khan and Achmad Najaar, as well as those held in detention. Ebrahim also eulogized their example in speeches.<sup>870</sup>

While the radical discourse became hegemonic after Ebrahim became the leader of PAGAD, this did not mean the end of internal contestation. For example, the entire

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<sup>865</sup> Abdussalaam Ebrahim, “Keynote Address”, National Conference, 7-8 August 1999.

<sup>866</sup> Undated text of speech.

<sup>867</sup> See the PAGAD website for variations on this theme at <http://www.PAGAD.co.za>

<sup>868</sup> Text of speech of Abdussalaam Ebrahim, Eid ul-Fitr, 9 February 1997, City Park Stadium, Crawford.

<sup>869</sup> “PAGAD to target and ‘remove’ the corrupt”, *Cape Times*, December 6, 1999, p. 2.

<sup>870</sup> See *We Salute Our Brothers* (pamphlet, Eid 2000), Abdussalaam Ebrahim, Speech, Eid al-Fitr 2000, and Announcement, Radio 786, 8 July 2000.

Boland Executive of PAGAD resigned in 2000 as a result of dissatisfaction over the involvement of Qibla and MAGO in PAGAD, the alleged political agenda of PAGAD, the alleged vision for a Muslim party, and the non-resolution of issues between PAGAD in the Boland and PAGAD in greater Cape Town.<sup>871</sup>

### *The motivations of supporters*

No authoritative survey has been done on the motivations of PAGAD supporters. However, speeches by leaders, documents by the organizations, remarks by supporters, and statements made during radio programs give an indication of diverse motivations. Throughout its existence PAGAD fed on the “sense of outrage felt by ordinary citizens” about violent crime and gangsterism and the lack of sufficient protection,<sup>872</sup> sometimes because of a sense of adventurism, as well as a strong concern about the effects of drugs on friends, family members and children.<sup>873</sup> Initially, it included many family members of drug addicts who had suffered from their drug-related behavior.<sup>874</sup>

The concern about the effect of drugs on friends and family was especially strong among women supporters. There may have been more of an emphasis on long-term solutions and salient structures of rehabilitation and development among women members, who formed a strong component of attendees at PAGAD meetings and marches, and often showed noticeable determination about addressing the issue.<sup>875</sup>

Women also had to deal with patriarchal attitudes in the organization, and occasionally met separately to express themselves more openly. Age and background sometimes meant different emphases among women, with older women focusing more on rescuing the traditional family, while a number of younger community and media activists like Abeedah Roberts had a broader political agenda.<sup>876</sup>

A sense of outrage and adventurism motivated some PAGAD members, but further motivations included family ties and previous involvement in the fight against the white government. Among members of the G-Force, small group dynamics involving a sense of identity and meaning also played a role. In some instances, tough measures by gangs and state agencies against PAGAD strengthened internal solidarity.

Officials with many years of anti-terrorist experience said it was more difficult to turn participants or to convince them to become informers than it had been when fighting ideological militants. Ideology could be chosen and changed, but for most of the Cape Muslim militants, Islam formed the basis of their communal identity from the days of

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<sup>871</sup> Interview with Farid Sayed, 24 September 2000.

<sup>872</sup> “The Struggle Intensifies” (editorial), *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 4 (November 1997), pp. 2-3 on p. 3.

<sup>873</sup> Shamil Jeppie, “Introduction” in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 13-16 on p. 15.

<sup>874</sup> Interview with Ganief Hendricks, Bellville City Library, 21 November 2000.

<sup>875</sup> Jeppie, “Introduction” in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 13-16 on p. 15 and Alex Dodd, “The Women of PAGAD”, in Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., pp. 64-68. This was still the case at marches personally attended in 2000.

<sup>876</sup> Ibid.



their childhood. People who were approached by the state agencies felt that they would turn against their whole heritage if they were to become informers.

In the view of senior law enforcement officials, communal identity and the perception of a minority under siege played a more important role than Islam as religion. In the vast majority of cases Islam as religion was not the main motivation. In their view, Islam as a religion served three purposes: it justified actions committed with other motives, it was a means of intimidation by declaring that somebody who was not with PAGAD was not a Muslim but a hypocrite/apostate who may be killed in terms of Islamic doctrine. It also was a means of protection, because many other Muslims were unwilling to turn over Muslims to the secular state or doubted whether informing on PAGAD was not against Allah. They therefore remained uncooperative.<sup>877</sup>

Converts to Islam, the so-called "Waterslamse" ("Water Muslims", an allusion to the Christian baptism of converts) also formed an important group among militants. A number of them were previous drug-users or gangsters or people with family members who were gangsters. As converts they could demonstrate their adherence to Islam and the group by participating in actions against gangsters.

However, in some ways the motivations of younger supporters overlapped with those of many young gangsters, often gangsters from Muslim families and sometimes from the same families as PAGAD supporters. Both PAGAD and the gangs provided for diverse needs: models of manhood, friendship, status and pride, overcoming boredom and experiencing thrills, group identity and a sense of belonging, and youth rebellion or the reproduction of family traditions.<sup>878</sup>

Jeppie has argued that PAGAD represented an effort to impose middle class values on working-class Muslims. This overlooks the devoutness of many working-class Muslims, and the involvement of many of them in the early PAGAD. Historically gangsterism was to some degree linked to working-class and lower-class conditions, as well as to social dislocation after the removal of many Coloureds from District Six. However, according to Pillay, some gang leaders in District Six had also come from shopkeepers, traders and craftsmen families, and the Group Areas Act's limits on movement by the Coloured and Indian middle class had created shared experiences and activities between members of the different classes. After 1994 there were also links between working and middle class consumers and mostly working-class but also middle class gangsters.<sup>879</sup>

It would be too reductionist to see PAGAD merely as another gang emerging from similar dynamics, or to depict PAGAD as either rooted in gang dynamics or as merely Islamist. It emerged as a community organization with some political networks. Coloured politics in the Western Cape, including both the ANC and the NP, also involved gangs in some areas. PAGAD could be more accurately depicted as a project not only to protect

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<sup>877</sup> Interview with law enforcement officials, Cape Town, 9 March 2000.

<sup>878</sup> See Andre Standing, *The threat of gangs and anti-gangs policy*, ISS Occasional Paper 116 at <http://www.iss.co.za/pub/papers/116/Paper116.htm>

<sup>879</sup> Pillay, "Experts, Terrorists, Gangsters", op. cit., p. 299.

Muslim families but also to create a new communal identity around specific interpretations of Islam, sometimes in interaction with Muslim gang members and dynamics, but with an early popular base and later militant membership who often came from socio-economic backgrounds different from most working-class gangsters.

Some gangs participated in the appropriation and articulation of some globally popular clothing styles and mannerisms, but not of others, for example the American surfing culture. Their translation and re-articulation infused it with local meanings.<sup>880</sup> A similar process occurred among PAGAD supporters who used different Palestinian and Jordanian headdress and slogans, removed however from their original sometimes conflicting associations. The struggle was also within the symbolic sphere between agents using local articulations of either global consumer or universal religious frameworks.

### *The use of popular mobilization*

Popular mobilization was always part of PAGAD's approach, and was in fact highly successful in the beginning. Popular mobilization reached a peak after the killing of Staggie, and then declined as the intensity and extent of continued violence changed popular opinion.

Initially, PAGAD's mobilization occurred through house and public meetings, a candlelight vigil in March 1996 at the time of the first big public protest march, also promoted on Radio 786, and other protest marches and motor cavalcades. According to law enforcement officials, between 1996 and 1999, PAGAD held 29 motor cavalcades, of which 24 occurred without any violence. Of these marches, 19 were held in Athlone, spread across these years, and four were held in Woodstock - three in 1996 and one in 1999. Violence occurred twice in 1996, in Athlone, Woodstock and Atlantis, and twice in 1998 in Athlone. There were only two cavalcades in 1996, in areas of the Cape Flats.<sup>881</sup>

There were a total of 17 legal and 16 illegal protest marches between 1996 and 1999: two legal and 10 illegal protest marches in 1996, of which eight involved violence; eight legal and five illegal marches in 1997, of which four involved violence; and two legal and one illegal march in 1998, of which two involved violence. By 1999, all five marches were legal and none involved violence.<sup>882</sup>

By 1998, public support had shrunk considerably, and the support base had become mostly lower middle class and working class, with a few intellectuals. Enforcement and violence by the state and PAGAD operatives, plus the increasingly political dimension of the movement, may have contributed to this state of affairs. The drop in public support was noticeable in the declining number of marches, from 12 in 1996 and 13 in 1997 to

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<sup>880</sup> Pillay, "Experts, Gangsters, Terrorists", op. cit., pp. 287-291.

<sup>881</sup> "PAGAD Motoroptogte: 1996-2000" (unpublished document).

<sup>882</sup> "PAGAD-Optogte" (unpublished document).

three in 1998 and five in 1999, with the attendance at marches and meetings declining from thousands in 1996 to the low hundreds by 1999.<sup>883</sup>

Marshals and movement in formation ensured some order during public protest marches. Marchers were often dressed in Muslim clothes and in most instances included a number of women and children. This projected the image of PAGAD as a movement of Muslims and Muslim families. These marches often concluded with memorandums being handed over to the authorities.

A typical protest march during the latter phase was on 12 February 2000, a time when PAGAD was under intense pressure financially, with many pending court cases against supporters and members. A disciplined and peaceful march was held after a meeting at the Muir Street mosque in District Six to Parliament in Cape Town to protest the new anti-terrorist legislation. Abeedah Roberts, Ebrahim Francis, Salie Abader and Cassiem Parker acted as the leaders of the group of just under 300 marchers. The slogans on posters and placards and those shouted reflected discourses in political Islam, Black Consciousness, Achmad Cassiem's work and the campaign against gangsters and anti-druglords.<sup>884</sup>

The first group of marchers was mainly male, the second group mostly young boys and girls and women, and the third group was mixed. The women were dressed in black Muslim dresses, while some men had Islamic dress and others only Islamic headgear and Western clothes. There was one white woman and no black people among the marchers, who, based on their clothes, seemed to be mostly from working class or lower middle class backgrounds. There were a few supporters of MAGO and a number of Qibla supporters, some in black Qibla T-shirts.<sup>885</sup>

The march was accompanied by intense surveillance by persons in civilian clothes moving parallel to the march as it progressed through the city, presumably personnel from state security agencies. A uniformed police presence on the route had already been established hours before the march. After the handover of the memorandum outside Parliament, the marchers dispersed without any incident.<sup>886</sup> Like most other public protest marches by PAGAD, this one was well-organized and did not include gratuitous violence or vandalism.

Marches to the houses of drug dealers were also conducted, the first one in July 1996.<sup>887</sup> This form of pressure became a bi-weekly event at the homes of suspected drug leaders.<sup>888</sup> PAGAD's marches to the houses of drug merchants giving them an ultimatum

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<sup>883</sup> "PAGAD-Optogte", op. cit.

<sup>884</sup> Personal observation of the march, Cape Town, 12 February 2000.

<sup>885</sup> Ibid.

<sup>886</sup> Ibid.

<sup>887</sup> "PAGAD – how events unfolded", *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10 and Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 10.

<sup>888</sup> Galant and Gamielien, op. cit., p. 10 18 July 1996.

to stop their activities attracted growing publicity. There were 54 such marches between August and December 1996. Thereafter, fewer such marches occurred.<sup>889</sup>

The repertoire of each march to drug dealers developed from event to event. For example, when confronting a drug dealer, he would say that he had obtained his mandrax from B or C or D. When confronted, B might refuse to pay tax and would be shot, C would cooperate and D would refuse to pay and his connections to policemen would be revealed.<sup>890</sup> Later, many PAGAD marches in neighborhoods ended with the public identification of drug dealers and the handing of ultimatums to drug dealers to end their activities.

Masked marchers would deliver an ultimatum to the house or shop of suspected drug dealers to "stop all illegal activities within 24 hours or face the mandate of the people". If no compliance occurred, the drug dealer would be shot shortly thereafter. PAGAD would read out a list of names of alleged drug dealers at its meeting at mosques and they were then given an ultimatum to confess at the Gatesville mosque. The drug dealers were first led to a PAGAD panel headed by Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim in a small room at the mosque, and they afterwards confessed in public before a court.<sup>891</sup>

If they did not confess, they would normally be shot within weeks. Another PAGAD list contained names of people denounced as "political criminals", including policemen who "should be eliminated". The dual approach of overt pressure and covert violence allowed the PAGAD leadership to publicly dissociate itself from the illegal activities of its G-Force.<sup>892</sup>

### *Fundraising*

The overt PAGAD movement organized "eat and treat" fundraising functions. Some members traveled to other provinces, where richer mostly Indian Muslims lived, to raise funds, a method often previously used to raise funds for mosque-building in the Cape.

Funds were also raised by extorting money from drug dealers.<sup>893</sup> Sometimes people against whom members had a grudge or who were only loosely connected to any drug trading were also called to appear in a mosque where a select panel would judge and sentence them.<sup>894</sup> PAGAD's actions put pressure on some Muslim businessmen. In August 1996, for example, a big advertisement appeared in *Muslim Views*, signed by prominent Muslims from across the spectrum, that the Campbell Hardware group was innocent and not involved in anything untoward.<sup>895</sup>

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<sup>889</sup> Botha, "The prime suspects?", op. cit.

<sup>890</sup> Interview with Yagyah Adams, 3 March 2000, MJC HQ, Athlone.

<sup>891</sup> Gottschalk, op. cit.

<sup>892</sup> See J. Damon, "PAGAD commander speaks," *Cape Times*, 21 January 1999, p. 1 and Boshoff et al., op. cit.

<sup>893</sup> Peet Bothma, "Aktivis verklap PAGAD geheime aan polisie," *Die Burger* 14 September 2000.

<sup>894</sup> Beauregard Tromp, "Cop alleges PAGAD uses Mafia extortion," *Cape Argus*, 16 February 2000, p. 2.

<sup>895</sup> "Announcement", *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 7.

Ebrahim said in a speech before a closed circle in 1999 that, as part of their penance, druglords had to contribute money to uplift the affected communities.<sup>896</sup> Already in September 1996, Ali Parker alleged that elements in PAGAD were using extortion against Muslim businesses to raise funds. In June 1998, Muslim-owned businesses started to become the targets of bombs for extortion, including car-bombs.

Incidents of extortion generally never reached the courts, in many instances because victims did not trust the quality of police protection. In some areas, PAGAD cells became a protection racket first and an anti-drug force second. Later state actions focused on inhibiting fundraising activities.<sup>897</sup> The confiscation of records by the security forces, harassment and arrests during fundraising drives, and police intimidation of supporters at “Eat and Treats” occurred.

Court cases were often postponed due to full court rolls, but PAGAD perceived this as a deliberate state strategy to exhaust the financial resources of the movement. From 1998 onwards, most PAGAD expenses were incurred in defending members in court.<sup>898</sup>

#### *The organization and recruitment of G-Force operatives*

PAGAD was reorganized under Ebrahim and Toefy. A national structure was established with regional structures. However, PAGAD Western Cape remained the dominant and best-organized section. PAGAD structures included the social welfare section, finance, sports and recreation, media, medical, legal and secretariat, all coordinated by the working committee, plus the security section, the G-Force. PAGAD also had a basic intelligence capacity. In terms of the PAGAD constitution, the National Chief coordinator, in consultation with the National Executive, could co-opt spiritual leaders to serve in a purely advisory capacity.<sup>899</sup>

On 19 October 1996, when Ebrahim called for the G-Force to go into action at a public meeting of 3000 people at the Gatesville mosque, some 400 people responded.<sup>900</sup> The G-Force was at that stage still operating relatively overtly. By December 1996 the G-Force had broken up into cells.<sup>901</sup> A senior police intelligence official also alleged that by mid-

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<sup>896</sup> A transcript of a speech on International Drugs Awareness Day 1999 says “Those who have been dealing in drugs in the community and was destroying this community, that have created monsters out of loving children, they will have to contribute all the blood money that they have made to this society, back to the families who have suffered because of evil deeds.”

<sup>897</sup> Harassment and arrest during fundraising drives and eat and treats were mentioned as challenges by PAGAD. See Igsaan Samaai, *People Against Gangsterism and Drugs Financial Report for the period August 1998-April 1999*.

<sup>898</sup> Ibid.

<sup>899</sup> PAGAD Constitution, Art. 6.2. This section is based on interviews with several officials. “Inside PAGAD’s G-force” in the *Cape Argus*, 10 October 2000, gives an insight into the workings of a particular cell in Grassy Park.

<sup>900</sup> “Statements made by Abdus Salaam Ebrahim inciting the use of violence” (unpublished document).

<sup>901</sup> *Cape Times*, 13 December 1996, p. 6.

1997, there were signs a new specialist squad had been formed, consisting of the best-trained and most reliable members of a cell.<sup>902</sup>

In general, from 1997 onwards, the security department or G-Force operated in cell structures and cell commanders, responsible for protecting the areas where PAGAD members lived. The overt working committee of PAGAD did not order violent actions or condemn those who committed them.<sup>903</sup>

According to the police, cells operated relatively independently, and at first, final orders were given by the Abdussalaam Ebrahim and the circle around him. In some cases, actions were taken by cells and only ratified afterwards. On 25 March 1999 at a PAGAD meeting at the Shaykh Yusuf kramat, Faure, Ebrahim allegedly stated that the G-Force need not wait for orders from him to annihilate druglords.<sup>904</sup> In his speech on Eid al-Fitr in 2000, he said: "Oh soldiers of Allah, you alone know what is happening in the battlefields. We salute you, we salute those who have pulled the trigger and caused the death of gangsters and drug dealers."<sup>905</sup>

According to law enforcement officials, the possibility did exist that some members of the working committee had links to the militants in the G-Force. By 1999, police estimated that there were at least 50 gunmen in PAGAD's G-Force. Recruitment occurred in family and friendship circles, making infiltration more difficult and movement and communication between cell members easier. Officials were of the opinion that members came from across the spectrum of functional and dysfunctional families.<sup>906</sup> PAGAD would sometimes deny that a particular supporter was a member or a member of the G-Force – one example was Ebrahim Jeneker in 1998.<sup>907</sup>

G-Force members included people who had earlier been involved in training for or actual activities during the violent political struggle against the white government, such as the brothers Nazier and Saeed Mahatey. Both Achmad Cassiem and Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim had been trained as guerillas under the auspices of the PAC. However, as more activists were detained, the dwindling popular support for PAGAD cells' violent activities meant that recruitment became difficult. However, discipline in the movement was exercised, also against members who left PAGAD. For example, some PAGAD members were involved in numerous shootings and petrol-bomb attacks against other former PAGAD members.<sup>908</sup>

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<sup>902</sup> See statement by senior superintendent Jeremy Veary, coordinator for police intelligence in the province, in "PAGAD's G Force becoming more professional: Intelligence Report," South African Press Association at [http://www.anc.org.za/anc/newsbrief/1997/news\\_0811](http://www.anc.org.za/anc/newsbrief/1997/news_0811).

<sup>903</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>904</sup> "Statements made by Abdus Salaam Ebrahim inciting the use of violence," op. cit.

<sup>905</sup> Abdussalaam Ebrahim, Speech, Eid al-Fitr 2000.

<sup>906</sup> Interview with law enforcement officials, Cape Town, 9 March 2000.

<sup>907</sup> "Suspect not linked to PAGAD", *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 3.

<sup>908</sup> Botha, "The prime suspects?", op. cit.

*The training, logistics and modus operandi of G-Force operatives*<sup>909</sup>

A few cell members had previously received state military training as soldiers, and a few trained as guerillas during the guerilla campaign against white rule. Training for G-Force members included the handling of weapons, the evasion of bullets when shot at, and conduct when confronted by police. Code words with Islamic themes were sometimes used, like Zam-Zam water for the fuel used in petrol bombs, to do *dhikr* (remembrance of God) for attacks and the call to prayer or *atha'an* for bomb attacks.<sup>910</sup>

Each cell was self-sufficient as far as weapons, bullet-proof vests and even sometimes pipe bombs were concerned. On the Cape Flats many unlicensed or stolen weapons were in circulation. Some weapons stolen by gangs at Faure military base found their way to some PAGAD operatives. Stellenbosch police station was robbed of 12 firearms on 19 March 1999. The new national structure probably enabled PAGAD Western Cape to gain access to funds and arms from other parts of the country.<sup>911</sup>

Violent methods used included stand-off shootings, drive-by shootings, homemade explosive devices, petrol bombs, pipe bombs, hand grenades and arson. People not involved in PAGAD or not knowing the purpose of the objects were hired to help in some phases of building pipe bombs. Later during the campaign, there was a shift from the use of gun powder in pipe bombs to that of ammonium nitrate, possibly in response to state investigation of people who bought gunpowder at fire-arm shops. In a number of cases of car bombs, pipe bombs were used to detonate the bombs in the boots of cars. Modified mobile phones were later used to detonate some bombs with precise timing.

Hitman teams of two were often used. The arms used consisted of pistols, shotguns and assault rifles. Cars, trucks and motorcycles were stolen and used as getaway vehicles and as car bombs. Getaway vehicles were mostly burned out at a different venue and abandoned. Although Achmad Cassiem, Abdussalaam Ebrahim and some PAGAD media articulated a discourse of martyrdom, including the use of suicide bombings,<sup>912</sup> there was no use of the suicide bombing tactic in the Cape campaign.

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<sup>909</sup> Peet Bothma, "Aktivis verklap PAGAD geheime aan polisie," *Die Burger* 14 September 2000 and Boshoff, et al, op. cit.

<sup>910</sup> "Gewese G-Force lid vertel van skietery en vervolging", *Die Burger*, 2 September 2000, p. 15; "Bombshell PAGAD blast testimony", *Saturday Argus*, 7-8 October 2000, p. 1; "Aktivis verklap PAGAD se geheime", *Die Burger*, 14 September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>911</sup> Botha, "The prime suspects?", op. cit., p. 6 and "Aktivis verklap PAGAD se geheime", *Die Burger*, 14 September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>912</sup> For example, during the Imam Haron commemoration at a Qibla meeting in Salt River, September 2000, Cassiem said: "Martyrdom is pivotal to the movement forward. Does martyrdom make sense? It makes moral sense: we believe it is right. It also makes political sense. Somebody has to stand up if all others are cowed. It also makes economic sense: two martyrs cleaned Lebanon of American marines." Broadcast by Radio 786, 24 September 2000.

## The impact on the state's fight against crime

### *Intimidation and violence against law enforcement personnel*<sup>913</sup>

The campaign of violence mainly focused on the intimidation and assassination of gang leaders and drug merchants, including nominal Muslims. However, it also included attacks against possible Muslim witnesses, Muslim leaders and law enforcement personnel, as well as symbolic targets. There were 24 shootings linked to PAGAD or PAGAD members or supporters in 1996, 61 in 1997, 86 in 1998, 44 in 1999 and four in 2000. Explosions linked to PAGAD or members/supporters amounted to 24 in 1996, 100 in 1997, 93 in 1998, 44 in 1999, and 10 in 2000. It is noticeable that most incidents of violence occurred under the leadership of Ebrahim.

Some of the middle class and upper-middle class supporters of the early PAGAD were also pro-ANC. Thus PAGAD could not only be construed as a completely anti-ANC movement.<sup>914</sup> However, under Ebrahim in its later phase, the movement was directed by those who had tried to combat the traditional dominance of the clerics and the ANC's negotiated settlement with the Afrikaner establishment – this constituted both an anti-clerical project and an effort to follow-up the transfer of power in 1994 with a second project: an Islamist takeover of leadership over Muslims.

The arrest of key G-Force members at the end of 1998 apparently catalyzed a change in militant tactics. Previously, the legitimacy and integrity of the police were severely questioned in discussions and broadcasts over Radio 786, during PAGAD meetings and in reports in *Al-Miftah*, the IUC newspaper. However, small group dynamics and a sense of camaraderie inside the militant cells may have done more to trigger the attacks on the law enforcement personnel.

Lansdowne and Mowbray police stations were targeted with pipe bombs in February and June 1998. From June 1998 a number of police stations received anonymous telephonic threats and in August 1998 the special investigative unit's offices in Bellville were also targeted with a pipe bomb.

Police investigators of PAGAD were attacked on three occasions in 1999. Captain Bennie Lategan was shot when he stopped at a traffic junction on 14 January 1999. It was part of an ambush: he had been traveling after receiving a call from a family member of the hitman. Eight of the fifteen shots fired from another car hit him in the back and two hit him in the arms. He died at the scene of the shooting.<sup>915</sup>

Superintendent Schalk Visagie, who worked at the Belville office but escaped the bomb attack in August 1998, was shot several times in February 1999 while traveling. He was

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<sup>913</sup> "PAGAD dreig glo senior speurders met dood," *Die Burger* 31 Januarie 2000, p. 9.

<sup>914</sup> The Boland coordinator of PAGAD, Faghrie Patel would later become deputy mayor of Stellenbosch and the ANC's mayoral candidate. "Patel ANC keuse in Stellenbosch eleksie", *Die Burger*, 13 Oktober 2000, p. 2.

<sup>915</sup> "PAGAD lede van Lategan moord aangekla", *Die Burger*, 5 May 2000, p. 1.



heavily wounded and survived the attack, but was declared 55% medically unfit and left the police. A third policeman, Sergeant Barry Chamberlain, escaped with his life after an attack at Cape Town airport in March 1999 and a bomb at his house in December 1999.

Bombs were set off at courts on days of court appearances by members and just after convictions or before judgments. On 24 December 1999, just before Christmas, regular police were called to investigate a crime in Green Point. When they arrived, a bomb in a refuse bin close by was detonated by cellphone. A policewoman lost her leg in this urban ambush.

By 2000 some investigators had to use safe houses and needed bodyguards. Leonard Knipe, the (now retired) commander of the Unit for Serious Violent Crimes, had several decades of experience related to gangs and terrorist groups, but remarked on occasion that he had seldom encountered such personal hatred by terrorists and had never encountered such fear among his investigators. Family members and colleagues of Lategan and Visagie made similar statements about these officers' state of mind to the press.

Two attempts were made to kill regional magistrate Wilma van der Merwe, who presided in a number of PAGAD trials, at her home. In 2000, a regional court magistrate, Piet Theron, who was the presiding officer in a number of PAGAD trials, was shot dead in his driveway by a man and a woman who followed his car after work.<sup>916</sup>

Police bodyguard services were at some stage provided to judges in PAGAD-related cases, Judges Deon van Zyl, Roger Cleaver and Nathan Erasmus.<sup>917</sup> The Department of Justice was later criticized for not sufficiently informing and/or protecting magistrates working with PAGAD-related cases.

Most of the officials attacked happened to be Afrikaners, and pro-PAGAD media would sometimes portray the police as a remnant of the old order. While Afrikaner officials did play a prominent role in the law enforcement agencies deployed against PAGAD<sup>918</sup>, Muslims aligned to the ruling ANC played a significant role too. Dawood Adams, the local head of the Directorate of Special Operations, which would later become the FBI-like Scorpions unit, was Muslim. So was the head of the police's Operation Good Hope against urban terror, Ganief Daniels, the inspector general of intelligence, Faizel Randera and several other security officials.

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<sup>916</sup> "'Oorlog teen staat'", *Rapport*, 10 September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>917</sup> "Guards shadow PAGAD trial judge", *Sunday Times Cape Metro*, 9 July 2000, p. 1; "'Departement van Justisie moet sy mense beskerm'", *Rapport*, 10 September 2000, p. 3; "High alert in terror cases" and "Killing haunts world legal body meeting", *Cape Argus*, 8 September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>918</sup> These Afrikaner officials included provincial detective head André du Toit, the team of detectives focusing on crimes against the state, the Peninsula murder and robbery unit to which Lategan and Visagie belonged, policemen like captain Heinrich Cooper, inspector Bertus Kruger and sergeant Riaan Theron, and advocates Willie Viljoen and Eunice Grey. See "Borgtog aan PAGAD lid te gevaarlik", *Die Burger*, 26 February 2000, p. 2 and "Key to the Keystone Cops", *Mail and Guardian*, 17-22 December 1999, p. 5.

Eventually, the state law enforcement forces succeeded in breaking PAGAD's key networks, using a combination of special teams, new intelligence based on better cooperation by disaffected members of the public, and through financial exhaustion as a result of long trials and court cases.<sup>919</sup> Several members were convicted of crimes ranging from illegal possession of guns to murder, and these members included Abdurraghman Thebus, an assistant imam at the Nurul Islam mosque in Oceanview. PAGAD's national coordinator, Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim and the spiritual leader or *amir*, his brother Abdur-Razaak Ebrahim, were sentenced to several years imprisonment for public violence.<sup>920</sup>

### *The state's response*

PAGAD was not only a movement that challenged the state as an alternative agency of law enforcement. It also challenged the human rights approach that dominated political and legal codes after 1994.

Ironically, the state later resorted to measures against gangs that reflected PAGAD's own assessment rather than an approach emphasizing individual human rights. The Prevention of Organised Crime Act of 1998 was based on the assumption that the power and influence of criminal enterprises were partly based on their accumulated assets. To hurt organized crime, the state tried to acquire the often-legalized resources of criminal groups. PAGAD did this by extortion and intimidation, and the Act envisaged expanded asset forfeiture after the conviction of criminals.<sup>921</sup>

In addition, the Act was based on the idea that the scope and increase in organized crime justified a harsher approach. As well, the Act was based on the idea that it was difficult to prosecute criminal leaders in a traditional justice system because they usually took care to create a plausible distance between themselves and the actual crimes committed by underlings. Thus, the Act criminalized membership of an enterprise involved in criminal activities. Additionally, the official policy was changed to vigorously target the so-called high-flyers or gang bosses.<sup>922</sup> While the methods of PAGAD differed from those of the state, and the two had become direct adversaries by 1998, they also had a very similar view about organized crime at that time.

Irrespective of state measures, by 2000 public trust regarding the efficiency of the SAPS and the justice system in combating crime was low again. Many gang leaders regained their confidence after the state broke PAGAD's back. By 2000, the army had to deploy in Manenberg to halt growing gang violence, and some gangsters in Mitchells Plain were confident enough to even consider planning to attack SAPS and SANDF security patrols

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<sup>919</sup> "Cops and spies pour into Cape to help end bomb terror", *Sunday Times*, 10 September 2000, p. 1; "Saak teen PAGAD lid, 2 broers tot 2001 uitgestel", *Die Burger*, 23 September 2000, p. 7; "Name the bombers: Reward nears R4m", *Cape Metro*, 24 September 2000, p. 1; "Bombshell PAGAD blast testimony", *Saturday Argus*, 7-8 October 2000, p. 1; "PAGAD 'hitman' gets 25 years", *Cape Times*, 4 October 2000, p. 1.

<sup>920</sup> See Gottschalk, op. cit. and "Convicted killers walk free", *Cape Times*, 19 September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>921</sup> Andre Standing, *The threat of gangs and anti-gangs policy*, ISS Occasional Paper 116, August 2005 at <http://www.iss.co.za>.

<sup>922</sup> Standing, op. cit.

to capture arms and ammunition.<sup>923</sup> Except for the example that vigilantism could change the power balance, the situation regarding drugs and gangsterism seemed to be returning to that of 1996. Many of the concerns that had energized PAGAD were as alive as ever, and the possibility of future vigilantism remained.

## **The impact on Muslims**

### *Interaction between PAGAD and gangs*

By mid-1996 gang leaders like the Staggies were openly conducting their business in many areas where they ruled through bribery, patronage and intimidation - even the police seemed powerless to protect people in some areas against gang rule. The killing of Rashaad Staggie and subsequent attacks by PAGAD vigilantes changed that. Before the crackdown on suspected PAGAD supporters in December 1999, the vigilante campaign forced the remaining gang leaders and their underlings to lie low in many of the territories they had previously dominated.

The communities' fear of the gangsters and druglords was converted into a fear of PAGAD druglords and gangsters. More than a dozen prominent gang leaders, including men (and one woman) who had ferocious reputations and real power over people in their areas, were killed by drive-by shootings and commando-type attacks. These included Achmat Thomas, leader of the Cisko Yukkies and Ismail April (alias Bobby Mongrel), leader of the Bobby Mongrels.

In most of the areas where Muslims formed a significant presence or at least a compact minority, PAGAD's actions had removed the first and second tiers of leadership in most gangs. However, PAGAD could not dominate all the gangs. In areas like Manenberg, for example, with its 50 000 inhabitants of whom about 15 000 were Muslims, the Americans and Hard Livings completely dominated and police estimated that a high percentage of men used some form of drugs. PAGAD did not dare to venture there and the police mostly remained onlookers.<sup>924</sup>

From 1996 to 1997 PAGAD's cell structures restricted most of their attacks to gang leaders and druglords. By mid-1997 there were signs a new hit squad had been formed.<sup>925</sup> Gang leaders were still targeted by hit squads, but some Qibla and G-Force members also began to target Muslims who did not belong to gangs, but actually opposed them.

Family members and friends of some PAGAD members were involved in the drug trade. Drug use among a few individual supporters also created interdependence and other types of relationships between some PAGAD structures and some gang members. Although

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<sup>923</sup> "Troops deployed in Manenberg in bid to quell gang violence", *Cape Times*, 13 April 2000, p. 2.

<sup>924</sup> Franco Fracassi and Laura Evans, "Money can buy immunity", *Mail and Guardian*, 25-31 July 1997, p. 6 and Gustav Thiel, "Cape Town – from wine route to drug route", *Mail and Guardian*, 25-31 July 1997, p. 6.

<sup>925</sup> See statement by senior superintendent Jeremy Veary, coordinator for police intelligence in the province, in "PAGAD's G Force becoming more professional: Intelligence Report," South African Press Association at <http://www.anc.org.za/anc/newsbrief/1997/news0811>

PAGAD started out as an anti-gangster organization, it eventually used Muslim gangsters in some of its operations.<sup>926</sup> Some hitmen were able to move freely in both middle class and working class gangster areas and circles.

In Athlone, the sons and younger relatives of PAGAD founding members later formed their own gang called the "Crazy Arabians." They did not attack drug merchants, but extorted from them. In some cases this practice spread to innocent merchants who had to pay the money demanded or suffer from shots or bombs thrown at their shops. This also drove away business.

In general, people in their twenties and thirties formed the core of G-Force members, but in a case in Mitchell's Plain, older people also used minors to shoot gangsters.<sup>927</sup> This coincided with the approach of some gangs to use boys of 11 to 15 years as assassins. According to the head of the Western Cape SAPS, Commissioner Lennit Max, such recruits were impressionable, often fascinated by firearms, and who believed they would not die and wanted to impress senior gang members. In addition, the criminal justice system treated them as juveniles.<sup>928</sup> PAGAD supporters did not only fight against criminal gangs, but also learned from them.

This was also apparent in PAGAD activities in jail. Activities were coordinated with friends and family members outside prison. Family members of jailed activists also appeared on Radio 786 programs, telling their side of the story, conveying messages from their imprisoned relatives and appealing for financial assistance.<sup>929</sup> Incidents of burning of cells and arms and cell phone smuggling inside prison occurred. Accused like Ebrahim Jeneker and Abdullah Brenner escaped from custody with assistance from inside. Part of the bombing campaign and the attack on magistrate Wilma van der Merwe was planned from inside prison.

On 3 January 1999 a burglary occurred at Claremont police station, during which firearms and keys were stolen. Shortly thereafter the keys were found in a cell block where PAGAD members were awaiting trial. A prison official, W. Basson, had an argument with two awaiting-trial PAGAD members and was shot in prison. He survived, but one of the attackers was able to notify a PAGAD hitman, Ebrahim Jeneker. The same evening, the same prison official was attacked by two masked men at home and shot again.<sup>930</sup>

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<sup>926</sup> *Die Burger*, 13 January 1999, p. 1.

<sup>927</sup> Interview with law enforcement officials, Cape Town, 9 March 2000.

<sup>928</sup> "Bendes kies kinders om moorde te pleeg", *Die Burger*, 27 Julie 2000, p. 3.

<sup>929</sup> For example, Tasneem Osman, sister of Dawood Osman, sentenced to 32 years for involvement in a number of killings, appeared on "Straight Talk," Radio 786 on 12 January 2000, also reading a poem purportedly written by her brother. On 6 January 2000, after an appearance by the mother of Abdullah and Ismail Maansdorp, charged with several counts of murders and intimidation, PAGAD's legal adviser Cassiem Parker appeared and explained his case during the "News, Reviews and Analysis" program.

<sup>930</sup> "Staat haal 14 van PAGAD uit Pollsmoor", *Die Burger*, 23 September 2000, p. 1; "PAGAD tronkvoëls 'juig na St. Elmo's'", *Die Burger* 5 Oktober 2000, p. 1 and interviews with officials.

PAGAD's actions also led to the gangs changing some of their approaches. Competing gangs coalesced to form CORE (Community Outreach Forum), with the professed aims of responding to PAGAD attacks and assisting with community upliftment. Rashied Staggie became the head of CORE. Some leaders relocated to other parts of the country. By 1998, PAGAD had precipitated the removal of more than half of CORE's leadership.

Some of the gangsters even turned to Christian discourses to rebuild their support base. Staggie converted to Christianity, possibly to win popular support against PAGAD among the mostly Christian brown working-class.<sup>931</sup> Local gangs also founded the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) under a Christian pastor, Albern Martins, who was linked to Staggie. After discussions with Ebrahim Rasool, the UDA later backed the ANC in the 1999 elections.<sup>932</sup>

The public position of the CORE leadership was not to attack PAGAD, but a faction decided to strike back and there were some retaliatory attacks on Muslim businessmen and PAGAD members. On occasion, gangsters also threatened visitors to PAGAD members in prison.<sup>933</sup> In its campaign to build a defence fund, all gangs were asked to provide money. This became in effect a clever extortion scheme by the 28's prisons gang, which dominated the Firm, which in turn dominated CORE.<sup>934</sup>

State actions against gangs, for example in Operation Crackdown, in which many suspects were arrested, never subdued the gangs' activities as the vigilantes did. However, the end result of PAGAD's actions was a more fragmented drug distribution network and a power struggle among the remaining second-level leaders, without any change in the broader socio-economic dynamics underpinning the drug trade.<sup>935</sup> According to Gastrow, four trends in organized crime continued uninterruptedly, namely growing sophistication of indigenous groups, the increasing role of international criminal groups, the use of more lethal weapons and the overall continued growth of organized crime.<sup>936</sup>

#### *The bombing campaign against symbolic targets*

The number of bombing incidents declined from 93 in 1998 to 16 in 1999, and the number of shootings from 86 in 1998 to 44 in 1999. However, the targets of bombings changed, at a time when public support for PAGAD was dropping and an increasing number of activists were detained by the police. In addition to targets related to gangs, druglords or the security forces, the bombing campaign, as with other types of physical intimidation measures by PAGAD supporters, was aimed at local political opponents of PAGAD. A bomb exploded in September 2000 near a political meeting of the provincial

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<sup>931</sup> Kinnes, op. cit., pp. 36-41.

<sup>932</sup> Taslima Viljoen, "Chief of 'gangster party' to throw his punches for ANC", *Saturday Argus*, 22 May 1999, p. 18.

<sup>933</sup> "Straight Talk", Radio 786, 26 March 2000.

<sup>934</sup> Kinnes, op. cit., pp. 42-44.

<sup>935</sup> Judy Damon, "Gang war revived in leadership struggles", *Cape Times*, 12 May 2000, p. 5.

<sup>936</sup> Peter Gastrow, "Main trends in the development of South Africa's organized crime", *African Security Review*, vol. 8 no. 6 (1999), pp. 58-69.

premier Gerald Morkel during the local election campaign. Another one exploded at the offices of the official opposition, the Democratic Alliance.

PAGAD did not deny or acknowledge bombings against druglords, but did deny any involvement in the bombing of symbolic public places.<sup>937</sup> Targets perceived as related to the US, globalized American culture or un-Islamic conduct were also attacked, but PAGAD denied involvement and criticized the attacks. On 25 August 1998 a pipe bomb went off at the Planet Hollywood restaurant in Cape Town, killing two people and wounding 26 - this created a considerable and media-enhanced shock among the public of the Western Cape. The bombing occurred after US missile attacks on Sudanese and Afghanistan targets in retaliation for the bombing of US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. Osama bin Laden allegedly connected the blasts in Cape Town with the explosions in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.<sup>938</sup>

An entertainment complex showing *The Siege*, described as an anti-Muslim film by local Muslim media, was bombed. So was a Kentucky Fried chicken outlet. A car bomb was detonated near the US consulate in Cape Town. Attacks on places of entertainment, including the St. Elmo's restaurant in Camps Bay on 28 November 1999, New York Bagels in Seapoint on 10 June 2000, Constantia Village shopping centre on 11 August 2000 and the Obz Café on 8 September 2000 also occurred. Two bars frequented by homosexuals, the Blah Blah bar and the Bronx, were bombed on 6 November 1999 and 19 August 2000 respectively.<sup>939</sup>

The latter attacks would have claimed many lives if people had been in the immediate vicinity. This may suggest that a nearby attacker detonated the devices only after the killing zones were free of people. The security services also investigated the possibility that the attacks could be linked to a protection racket.<sup>940</sup>

The intensified bombing campaign occurred during an increase of planned PAGAD meetings aimed at mass mobilization, as well as court appearances by members.<sup>941</sup> However, no reliable intelligence was obtained on who was responsible for the bombings of symbolic public places and PAGAD denied that it was responsible.

#### *Intimidation and violence against Muslim witnesses*

Charges and cases against accused were withdrawn due to the killing of eight witnesses. The witnesses included Nathier Brown, Achmat Dollie and Ebrahim Gallie, shot when he visited his family in contravention of witness protection arrangements. A Muslim

<sup>937</sup> See the PAGAD press statement of 16 August 1999 and other statements at <http://www.PAGAD.co.za>.

<sup>938</sup> R. Yusufzai, "Conversation with terror," *Time*, 11 January 1999, pp. 32-33 on p. 32.

<sup>939</sup> "PAGAD verband met bom bekyk", *Die Burger*, 12 Augustus 2000, p. 2; "Bomb blasts Obs", *Saturday Argus*, 9-10 September 2000, p. 1; "Cape Town bomb", *Sunday Times*, 20 August 2000, p. 1; "Bang goes the boom", *Sunday Times*, 10 September 2000, p. 1; "Bomterreur duur voort", *Die Burger*, 9 September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>940</sup> Bonny Schoonakker, "Bombers play cat and mouse with the cops," *Sunday Times*, 17 September 2000, p. 21; "PAGAD glo hernieuwde terreur in stad is set van wetgewers", *Die Burger*, 31 Augustus, p. 2.

<sup>941</sup> See for example "PAGAD-lede in hof – nog 'n bom ontplof", *Die Burger*, 13 January 2000, p. 1.

husband and wife, key state witnesses in a case against PAGAD members linked to a bombing attempt and enrolled in the witness protection program, were assassinated after Christmas 2000. Mohamed Zaid Abraham, a witness against PAGAD and former member, was killed in April 2001 when, in contravention of his witness protection program, he visited his home to celebrate his daughter's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.<sup>942</sup>

This campaign against state witnesses had a considerable impact as it intimidated the relatively close-knit Muslim community. It was highly effective in silencing many potential witnesses and causing most to be unwilling to testify in court.

#### *Intimidation and assassination of rival Muslim leaders*

PAGAD also aimed at becoming the dominant Muslim political actor, especially under Ebrahim. As a result, potential rival Muslim leaders were targeted, with the initial focus on the first leadership corps of PAGAD. A hand grenade was thrown into Nadthmie Edries' home in 1997. Muhammad Ali Parker was attacked in the driveway of his house and shot in the back by two unknown gunmen in 1998. Farouk Jaffer was killed in his vehicle during a drive-by shooting close to his home in 1999 and Ebrahim Satardien was killed in his car by two men on 1 October 1999.<sup>943</sup>

The Muslim leader of the provincial ANC, Dullah Omar, as well as a later successor, Ebrahim Rasool, was harassed. Rasool was threatened during family outings and physically ejected from the Kromboom Road mosque when he wanted to speak there. The campaign also targeted clerics physically, in conjunction with an ambivalent claim to weaken the authority of the clerics. PAGAD promoted the message that every Muslim was an imam and an authoritative interpreter of Islam, while also insisting that PAGAD's framework was the only correct one.

On 10 January 1997, a 50-strong group of PAGAD supporters for the first time physically harassed clerics, while being watched by their masked *amir* Abdulrazzaq Ebrahim: they verbally abused and manhandled Shaykh Moegammad Moerat and his family during the Friday mid-day service before Ramadan.

Maulana Ebrahim Moosa, a prominent intellectual highly respected among many pro-ANC Muslims, criticized PAGAD's methods and was declared an enemy of Islam by PAGAD's legal spokesman. This was reported upon by Radio 786. A day later, a balaclava-clad PAGAD squad prevented other people from coming close to Moosa's house and shortly thereafter a bomb was thrown at the house. As with Sh. Sadullah Khan, a cleric previously sympathetic to some PAGAD objectives but who had retracted permission for PAGAD to use the Masjidul Quds Gatesville mosque, Moosa felt so threatened that he left the country.<sup>944</sup>

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<sup>942</sup> "Saak teen PAGAD lede teruggetrek", *Die Burger*, 20 May 2000, p. 2.

<sup>943</sup> Marianne Merten, "Murdered PAGAD leader was informer," *Mail and Guardian*, 23-29 July 1999, p. 2.

<sup>944</sup> A. Ismail, "Two respectable scholars leave after threats," *Sunday Times*, 13 September 1998. Also see Gottschalk, op. cit.

After he criticized PAGAD's conduct, the house of the MJC's head Shaykh Nazeem Mohamed was firebombed on 17 February 1998. On 16 October 1998, PAGAD members, including Abdussalaam Ebrahim and hitman Ebrahim Jeneker, were involved in accosting and manhandling Sh. Sedick at the Gatesville mosque. In response to a charge of being religious gangsters in 1998, the MJC stated that it had advised PAGAD and remained willing to do so.<sup>945</sup>

On 23 November 1999 PAGAD supporters again accosted Maulana Igshaan Hendricks at the Gatesville mosque, disrupting his talk.<sup>946</sup> The family of Sh. Sedick was threatened when he wanted to stand as an ANC candidate in the local elections of 2000 and he withdrew his candidature.<sup>947</sup> Simultaneously, the campaign to attack the reputations and weaken the authority of the MJC clerics was also conducted from the platforms of the IUC and Radio 786.

### *PAGAD and the MJC*

Although clerics had been involved in community protection initiatives, the PAGAD movement took the initiative from clerics and the MJC regarding the socially-important issue of drugs and gangsterism. The existing relationship between an imam, mosque and congregation, which was based on smaller community structures, was no longer able to address the various issues involved. Outdated counseling techniques or approaches also did not take account of the different socialization of new generations.

Many of the MJC clerics were ambivalent about PAGAD but were sympathetic towards the objectives of PAGAD supporters in order to counter the druglords and gang leaders. Initially, consultation on the Shariah's prescriptions regarding martyrdom and jihad and the killing of gang leaders and druglords took place. The MJC's president also committed himself to support PAGAD's ideals at the Vygieskraal meeting of PAGAD on 11 August 1996, probably the biggest Muslim community event after the Tri-Centenary festivities in 1994. However, the MJC distanced itself from the Staggie killing and reserved the right to criticize the actions and methods of PAGAD whenever these did not conform with the Shariah.<sup>948</sup>

By 1995, the Boorhaanol Islam movement, in which a revered MJC member like imam Bassier played a leading role, described it as a pity that local Muslims did not appreciate "the potential of the mosques as a dynamic infrastructure to serve their socio-political needs, preferring to marginalize it and use it for ritual aspects only".<sup>949</sup> However, by 1998 it said that the position of the mosque was still evolving, that Muslims were politically diverse, and that too close an association between a mosque and a movement like

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<sup>945</sup> "Religious gangsters?", *Ad-Da'wah*, August 1998, p. 1.

<sup>946</sup> "Weathering the storm", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1998, p. 2; "Gatesville Mosque – Roewa", *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1999, p. 2. Ml. Hendricks, at the time increasingly prominent in the MJC, currently is the MJC president.

<sup>947</sup> Telephone interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, 16 November 2000.

<sup>948</sup> "MJC Policy: Crime and substance abuse", *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1996, p. 3.

<sup>949</sup> "Blind Justice," *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 31 no. 1 (1995), pp. 2-3.



PAGAD could cause division. The experiences of some mosques being caught up in the struggle between PAGAD and druglords contributed to a change in emphasis.<sup>950</sup>

Some elements in the early days of PAGAD, especially those close to Qibla, were critical of the clerics, while many initial supporters still accepted the authority of the clerics. However, criticism of the clerics from within PAGAD continued and under the leadership of Ebrahim clearly extended to a delegitimization of the clerics. This campaign was in some ways a continuation of the “process of muscling in and dislocating the traditional Islamic symbolic capital” directed by the pre-1994 Qibla.<sup>951</sup>

However, as described above, it also became a campaign of physical intimidation and violence to remove rivals for the leadership of Muslims as a group. By 2000, even Muslim community leaders sympathetic to PAGAD’s original objectives were complaining that PAGAD had become such a tyrannical force in some mosques that anyone with a dissenting view was too scared to air it.<sup>952</sup> Nevertheless, the MJC stated that while vigilantism was unacceptable, due process and speedy trials instead of long detentions of PAGAD members were necessary.<sup>953</sup> Even while the formation PAGAD had taken could be criticized, another initiative of community protection would still be needed.

#### *Muslims and an Islamist order*

PAGAD’s emergence was very much linked to the local context, the particular dynamics within the Coloured population, and the interactions between working-class and middle class Muslims in the Western Cape in the 1990s. For example, attempts by PAGAD to form a Durban chapter under Rasheed Suleman failed.<sup>954</sup>

While some PAGAD supporters and activities showed an overlap with local gang dynamics, the early PAGAD campaign partly represented an effort to impose a middle-class framework on many working-class Muslims. It also had a considerable performative dimension, with a new emphasis on new forms of Islamic dress or headscarves related to the Palestinian struggle and related innovations and radical Islamist slogans.<sup>955</sup> These served to attract more attention from the mainstream and largely non-Muslim local and international media<sup>956</sup>, which may have increased the incentive to act accordingly, but also served to clearly differentiate Muslim Coloureds from non-Muslim Coloureds.

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<sup>950</sup> "Violating the Sacred," *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 33 no.1 (1998), pp. 2-3.

<sup>951</sup> Le Roux and Jhazbhay, op. cit., p. 94.

<sup>952</sup> Personal conversations with these people, 1999-2000.

<sup>953</sup> "The PAGAD trials and arrests", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 2000, p. 1.

<sup>954</sup> Goolam Vahed, *Changing Islamic Traditions*, op. cit., p. 63.

<sup>955</sup> See Abdulkader Tayob, "Islamism & PAGAD: Finding the Connection" in Galant and Gamieldeen, op. cit., pp. 29-36 on pp. 33-34 and Bangstad, *Islamisation, gender and the social structuring of memory*, op. cit., pp. 10-13.

<sup>956</sup> See Tayob, "Islamism & PAGAD", op. cit. and Gabeba Baderoon, "Covering the East – Veils and Masks: Orientalism in South African Media", in Wasserman and Jacobs, *Shifting Selves*, op. cit., pp. 315-338.

Among other things, the campaign constituted an attempt to form a new Muslim communal identity with a strong transnational dimension amidst the diverse Muslim and Coloured population. It also aimed to weaken and replace the authority of most of the established clerics. Lastly, it tried to increase the gap between Muslims and the existing Muslim leaders or government authorities, with the objective of establishing an Islamist socio-political order.

The campaign against the clerics resulted in MJC spokesmen emphasizing the historical contribution, authority and legitimacy of the clerics as interpreters of Islam. The system of selection and accountability of clerics was reformed, also in line with a longer-term process of professionalization. Some changes may have been influenced by the campaign of delegitimization and violence. However, changes were not brought about by PAGAD replacing the existing clerics, but rather by the clerics themselves.

The MJC established the congregation as the key actor in the selection of clerics, which represented a challenge to the practice of hereditary imams. It constituted an effort to increase the popular legitimacy of the clerics and would have countered the criticism of PAGAD that the MJC was an elite group not representative of the broader Muslim community. However, in numerous cases imams and congregations continued their existing practices.

The MJC leadership also engaged in efforts to recast the opponents as being Shia-inclined, and to marginalize such alleged adherents of Shia Islam in the Cape. In addition, there were efforts to sabotage or obstruct the allocation of a broadcasting licence to the IUC radio station, which was very supportive of PAGAD. Links with Saudi institutions and the ruling ANC were established or expanded, which had the effect of presenting a counter-force to the pro-Iran and pro-PAC leadership of the IUC, or at least denying it similar access to these greater forces.

However, on the ground, the potential use of violence against the clerics and their supporters remained. The state had a limited ability to protect them, and except perhaps in the case of someone like Sh. Ibraaam Hendricks, members of the Muslim community were unable to adequately protect the clerics in their area.

This meant that many of the clerics kept a low profile in the struggle between the IUC and PAGAD on the one hand, and the MJC on the other. Those who took a stand against the former actors resorted to indirect means to fight back, such as the confidential letter to the broadcasting authorities or, in the case of the signatories of the Open Letter, they did not follow through with a persistent high-profile campaign against the violence in their midst. The campaign of intimidation did successfully inhibit the freedom of action of many clerics and the MJC.

In many ways the increased and diversified use of violent methods reflected a loss in popular support rather than a rise in the intensity of popular grievances. The early popular vigilantism of PAGAD often meant that the IUC had a high profile and was able to plausibly present itself as a possible community-based alternative leader of the Muslim

community. However, the decline in popular support for violent methods later linked to PAGAD structures coincided with a drop in support for the IUC.

By 2000, the freedom of action of MJC clerics was in many ways inhibited by intimidation and violence, but its main contender for popular support was weaker than, for example, in the days of successful popular mobilization in 1996. As a result, the clerics remained the dominant interpreters of Islam and the most respected custodians of Islam's symbolic capital. Prominent clerics faulted the path that PAGAD had taken, but still supported the idea of Muslim initiatives of community protection.

## Chapter 6: Muslim networks and electoral politics

### The heterogeneous new political order

This chapter describes and analyzes the role of Muslims in electoral politics during the period 1994-2000. It focuses on three dimensions: group dynamics in the heterogeneous new political order, non-electoral options pursued by Muslims as a minority in a majoritarian democracy dominated by the executive, and the interaction between these dynamics and Muslim and Islamist electoral politics.

The new order encompassed diverse networks of power and values. These included several black ethnic political orders, the white-ruled state, which included much of the Afrikaner nationalist project for self-rule, and Indian and Coloured communities with various forms of self-rule and leadership structures. An interim constitution underpinned the new and still-developing order with its diverse political forces and both inter-group and intra-group contestation over identities, resources and power.<sup>957</sup>

The negotiated transfer of power from the Afrikaner-dominated National Party to the African National Congress (ANC) in the 1990s entailed three phases. The first phase was negotiations to determine the governing institutions in the second phase, in which non-elected jointly appointed institutions governed the transition. The 1994 elections and the 1995-1996 local elections introduced the final transitional phase of an elected government of national unity (GNU), provincial governments and local governments.<sup>958</sup>

In terms of a broad program variously called “transformation” or the National Democratic Revolution, new projects emerged to try and unify various political forces. The period between the unbanning of the ANC and PAC by FW de Klerk in 1990 and the final constitution of 1996 resulted in the formation of a new political system, but also a transformed bureaucratic apparatus, institutional decision-making system and state.

Before 1994, large sectors of the Muslim community and even those aligned to the NP were essentially spectators in the process of transition. However, individual Muslims aligned to the ANC and PAC played a more significant role than ever in the formation of the political order in South Africa. They filled several of the leadership or support positions of the ANC and PAC negotiation teams and the transitional institutions.<sup>959</sup> Whereas Muslims tended to be on the margins of the political orders developed under

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<sup>957</sup> For a general background, see Mohamed Adhikari, *Hope, Fear, Shame, Frustration: Continuity and change in the expression of Coloured identity in white supremacist South Africa, 1910-1994* (D.Phil. thesis, University of Cape Town, July 2002); Tom Lodge, *Black politics in South Africa since 1945* (Ravan Press: Johannesburg, 1983); Peter Berger and Bobby Godsell (eds.), *A Future South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1988), pp. 7-28; Rodney Davenport, *The Transfer of Power in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1998) and Hermann Giliomee, *The Afrikaners – Biography of a People* (Tafelberg: Cape Town, 2003).

<sup>958</sup> Heribert Adam, Frederik van Zyl Slabbert and Kogila Moodley, *Comrades in Business: Post-Liberation Politics in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1997), pp. 69-70.

<sup>959</sup> Faried Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism: An Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Oppression* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1997), pp. 209-210.

Dutch, English and Afrikaner rule, individual Muslims would also play an important role in the development of the new ANC-ruled state as a complex nexus of formations during 1994-2000.

In 1994, the ANC consisted of four groups with distinctive political cultures, with Muslim individuals making their presence felt in all these groups. Nelson Mandela and others like Ahmed Kathrada imprisoned at Robben Island had developed a consensual decision-making style, while the exiles, including Thabo Mbeki and his close associates Essop and Aziz Pahad, were used to centralized decision-making, information-sharing on a need-to-know basis, no public criticism and the unopposed election of leaders.<sup>960</sup> The military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe, in which Muslims like Mohammed Shaik and Ismail Ayob were among the operators, operated as a hierarchical disciplined group. The internal wing consisting of a broad front of civic organizations in the United Democratic Front, in which the progressive Muslim thinkers and later cabinet ministers Mohammad Valli Moosa and Dullah Omar were active, relied on grassroots consultation, mandates from supporters and robust debates.<sup>961</sup>

With the support of among others Dullah Omar, later leader of the ANC in the Western Cape, Thabo Mbeki succeeded in eliminating Cyril Ramaphosa, who had the support of Moosa, as the strongest other contender in the struggle for the vice-presidency.<sup>962</sup> By the end of 1995, Mbeki, with the close support of the Pahad brothers, was in charge of the day-to-day running of the government, while Mandela was focused on the symbolic politics of nation-building.<sup>963</sup> This symbolic politics for the first time included a very public recognition of Islam (and Judaism) on an equal standing with Christianity in SA.

#### *Patronage and economic empowerment*

The ANC took power with the cooperation or active support of the key actors of the global and local neo-liberal establishment. The corporate sector was mostly controlled by English-speaking whites with a smaller Afrikaner component, but also included several businesses in which Muslims played a prominent or dominant role.

After 1994, Muslims also acquired more prominent positions in the Western Cape Traders Association, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and management positions.<sup>964</sup> Some Muslims used their links to local ANC politicians to advantage, while

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<sup>960</sup> When Mbeki was still involved with the SA Communist Party, he was close to Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, a prominent Muslim member of the SACP. Essop Pahad also belonged to the SACP. See Terence Corrigan, *Mbeki: His time has come. An introduction to South Africa's new president* (SA Institute of Race Relations: Johannesburg, 1999), p. 2 and David P. Thomas, "Post-Apartheid Conundrums: Contemporary Debates and Divisions Within the South African Communist Party", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, vol. 25 no. 2 (May 2007), pp. 250-273 on p. 256.

<sup>961</sup> William Mervyn Gumede, *Thabo Mbeki and the battle for the soul of the ANC* (Cape Town: Zebra Press, 2005), pp. 40-41. See also Patti Waldmeir, *Anatomy of a Miracle: The End of Apartheid and the Birth of the New South Africa* (Viking: Penguin Group, 1997), pp. 82-83; 254-257.

<sup>962</sup> Gumede, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

<sup>963</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>964</sup> *Muslim Views*, October 1994, p. 6; "Corporate conduct", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 33 no. 1 (1997), pp. 28-35 on pp. 28-29.

others also adapted to new political themes. For example, First Central Insurance, the first insurance company with Muslims prominent among the management and owners, was established in 1998 and was explicitly linked to the African Renaissance project.<sup>965</sup> In addition, some Muslim business people were able to use their links with Muslim countries in the Middle East and Asia. However, this did not necessarily result in a stronger position for Islam or Muslims as a group in the public domain.

The ANC leadership represented a new political and economic elite that tried to balance different interests while remaining in control. Its main subordinate allies were the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the South African Communist Party (SACP), and various smaller leftwing non-government organizations, with Muslims active in all these groups. However, the bulk of ANC support came from the black poor, but the black middle class also saw it as their vehicle to prosperity and power.

The ANC leadership presented itself with a discourse emphasizing themes like racial equality, redistribution of wealth, transformation of the political system, counter-globalisation and the National Democratic Revolution. Many trade union and SACP leaders were coopted by deploying them in ministries dealing with socio-economic service delivery. In this way, they served to credibly portray the policy of black capitalism and elite empowerment as part of the national democratic revolution. The leftists were unable to unite a diverse potential constituency of organized and unorganized urban workers, unemployed and rural blacks.<sup>966</sup>

However, while the main ANC discourse tried to ward off the greatest threat to the ANC-led alliance - a leadership challenge or breakaway by these factions - its actual practices and outlook were centrist. While its economic policy in 1990 was still nationalisation of basic industries, in 1996 it abolished the ministry responsible for the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP), with its emphasis on a more equal socio-economic order. The new policy blueprint, called GEAR (Growth Employment and Redistribution) emphasized a neo-liberal program of fiscal discipline and market forces, and constituted a rejection of unionism as a political approach.<sup>967</sup>

Many former ANC activists would in time become indebted to business interests, and used access to political office to increase personal power and wealth and to deliver on promises made. According to Lodge, Mandela's cabinet and a considerable number of senior officials were overpaid for a country like SA.<sup>968</sup> The relationship between the

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<sup>965</sup> "Muslim community point of focus for SA's First Black-Owned Insurance Firm", *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1998, p. 7.

<sup>966</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 162-174, Waldmeir, op. cit., pp. 281-282, and Z.B. du Toit, *Die Nuwe Toekoms: 'n Perspektief op die Afrikaner by die eeuwisseling* (J.P. van der Walt: Pretoria, 1999), pp. 280-294.

<sup>967</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 156-161, 172-186. See also Corrigan, op. cit., pp. 94-95, Du Toit, *Die Nuwe Toekoms*, op. cit., p. 295 and Patrick Bond, *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa* (University of KwaZulu Natal Press, 2000).

<sup>968</sup> Tom Lodge, "A Year in the new SA", *Indicator SA*, vol. 12 no. 2 (Autumn 1995), pp. 7-10. Also see Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 90-92 and "ANC admits officials are taking bribes", *Sunday Times*, 4 June 2000, p. 2.

ANC and the largest business conglomerate, Anglo American, indicated an even closer association between government and the corporate business sector than existed for most of the period after 1948. Mandela reportedly sought approval for two cabinet appointments from Oppenheimer and briefed him after trips overseas. The mutual cooperation fuelled conspiracy theories among anti-ANC Muslims about the links between domestic and international interest groups and the new government.<sup>969</sup>

The ANC encountered no significant counter-force within the new political system. The ANC and the NP had initially formed a government of national unity in 1994, with the NP as a junior partner. However, the NP withdrew from the government of national unity in June 1996 when it realized that it had no power to influence government decisions. It became the official opposition and Marthinus van Schalkwyk succeeded FW de Klerk as leader of the NP in 1997, while Gerald Morkel succeeded Hernus Kriel as NP prime minister of the Western Cape in 1998.<sup>970</sup>

By early 1997 the ANC had taken over the remaining bureaucratic levers of powers, especially the law enforcement agencies and the defence force. Mbeki claimed the presidency at the ANC national conference in 1997. He was used to centralized decision-making, information-sharing on a need-to-know basis, no public criticism and pre-ordained election of leaders. He also established several structures outside the formal parliamentary, ministerial and party structures.<sup>971</sup>

Many cadres of the ANC considered it as a revolutionary liberation movement embodying the will of the population. The legitimacy of opposition parties was therefore denied; they were seen as protectors of vested interests trying to sabotage the new system.<sup>972</sup> Under Mbeki's control, the black-dominated executive and bureaucracy became more important in policy-making than parliament. The dominant executive limited the potential impact of minority group and Muslim electoral politics after 1994.

#### *Group attitudes and approval of the government*

Individual Muslim and non-Muslim Coloureds and Indians would play an important role in the development of the new ANC-ruled state as a complex nexus of formations. However, this state had to establish its authority over a diverse public domain with potentially entrenched anti-ANC interest groups. In 1994, the SA population with its political traditions of racialised politics was 71% black, 10% Coloured, 16% white and

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<sup>969</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 170-172 and the chapter on transnational politics.

<sup>970</sup> Hennie Kotzé, "The New National Party in the 1999 election: end of the road or a new beginning?", *Politikon* vol. 26 no. 2 (1999), pp. 167-177 on p. 168; Willie Breytenbach, "The New National Party" in Andrew Reynolds (ed.), *Election '99 South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki* (James Currey: Oxford, 1999), p. 119. Also see Waldmeir, op. cit., pp. 271-273.

<sup>971</sup> Gumede, op. cit., pp. 40-41 and 49; Vishnu Padayachee, Imraan Valodia and Thokozani Xaba, "Reflections on the Post-Mandela Era", *Indicator SA*, vol. 16 no. 3 (Spring 1999), pp. 15-20 on p. 15.

<sup>972</sup> Patrick Laurence, "Democracy or Control?: South Africa after the Election", *Indicator SA*, vol. 16 no. 2 (Winter 1999), pp. 29-32 on pp. 31-32.

3% Indian.<sup>973</sup> The predominantly Coloured and Indian Muslims formed a very small minority of less than 2% within this population.

At the national level, limited foreign and local investment, rising unemployment and the movement of many into the informal sector, as well as a shift to a more skills-based economy, fuelled an increasing gap between different income groups after 1994. Unemployment among higher educated youth, for example, increased from 27% in 1994 to 34% in 2000, and among less-educated youth from 37% in 1994 to 44% in 2000.<sup>974</sup> This also had an effect on the many lesser-skilled and poorer members of the Muslim community.

In the Western Cape particular territorial and regional dynamics reinforced group divisions and group politics. Many Coloureds perceived the Western Cape as their place, where they originated and to which they had a privileged claim. Under Afrikaner rule, the Western Cape was also a labour preferential area for Coloureds until 1986, and the living standards and income of Coloureds in the Western Cape were better than elsewhere in SA.<sup>975</sup>

The migration to the Cape Peninsula of thousands of people from the previously independent black homelands Ciskei and Transkei and from other countries in Africa, including Angola, Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo, increased the pressure on the region's infrastructure, services and economy. This had a sporadic impact on Muslim communities in areas like Athlone, Heideveld and Bonteheuwel. Agriculture, fisheries and tourism also did not provide enough job opportunities in the province and some migrants constituted competition to lower-skilled Coloureds in the job market. While the countering of crime provided a potential theme of national identity, many Coloureds also perceived crime by both migrant and settled young blacks as an increasing issue of concern.<sup>976</sup>

Violent crime had in fact become an issue of national concern after 1994. The new government's authority in some areas was limited and in general it was unable to successfully combat violent crime. Unsuccessful tax collection efforts outside the white population, the understaffed police force and overloaded justice system, deficient border and customs control, and creeping corruption all signaled its limited power.<sup>977</sup> In 1995, the number of people in SA who felt unsafe also started to increase, with an increasing convergence between members of the different groups.

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<sup>973</sup> Gumede, op. cit., p. 82.

<sup>974</sup> Tom Lodge, "South African politics and collective action, 1994-2000", in Bert Klandermans, Marlene Roefs and Johan Olivier (eds.), *The state of the people: Citizens, civil society and governance in South Africa, 1994-2000* (Human Sciences Research Council: Pretoria, 2000), pp. 35-36.

<sup>975</sup> Ibid., pp. 40-41 and John Western, *Outcast Cape Town* (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1996), pp. 332-356, especially 335.

<sup>976</sup> Ibid., pp. 1-46 on p. 45; Frederik van Zyl Slabbert, *Duskant die geskiedenis: 'n Persoonlike terugblik op die politieke oorgang in Suid-Afrika* (Tafelberg: Jonathan Ball Uitgewers, 2006), pp. 144-145; Jamie Frueh, *Political Identity and Social Change: The remaking of the South African Social Order* (University of New York Press: New York, 2003), p. 154.

<sup>977</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 90-92.



Among blacks, 11% felt unsafe in 1994, but this percentage increased to 43% by November 1998. In September 1994, 30% of whites felt unsafe, compared to 56% in November 1998. In 1997, almost 90% of Indians and whites, more than 60% of Coloureds and more than 50% of blacks expressed strong disapproval of the government's handling of crime.<sup>978</sup>

The lack of perceived and real security was linked by some people to government inefficiency and corruption. In general, the evaluation of the government was based on trust, or an estimate of future performance, and approval, an estimate of past performance. Almost 25% of respondents believed the new government was as corrupt as they believed the old one to be, with another 41% believing the new one to be more corrupt. In addition, in surveys of the Human Sciences Research Council in March 1999, about 22% of black voters thought that it would be 'impossible or dangerous' to disagree politically with politicians.<sup>979</sup>

While Coloureds were relatively well-off, in the Reality Check Survey in 1999 29% felt that they were losers in the new system as opposed to 11% who felt that they were winners, with 60% in the middle. Among Indians, 62% felt they were losers, with 35% in the middle, while 55% of whites felt they were losers and 42% were in the middle category.<sup>980</sup>

This coincided with a strong sense of marginalisation among Coloureds, with 36% of Coloureds and 57% of whites feeling that the government did not represent their interests, compared to 7% of blacks. There was growing impoverishment among the Coloured working-class and lower middle class, with 20% of respondents unable to pay for service delivery, and many were affected by cutoffs. Many felt they had received no tangible benefit from the new order, and that they had actually lost their status and ended up at the bottom of the socio-political hierarchy.<sup>981</sup>

Adhikari described the dominant discourse in this way: "There is a strong feeling that the Coloured people have traded one set of oppressors under apartheid for a larger, even more unscrupulous set of oppressors since 1994...Because of continued and deep-seated antipathy towards Africans within the Coloured community and perceptions of being victimized by an African-dominated government, South African political and economic life is seen as necessarily adversarial, with cleavages drawn along racial lines."<sup>982</sup>

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<sup>978</sup> Gideon Pimstone, "Public Perceptions, Underreporting and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies", *Nedcor ISS Crime Index*, vol. 2 no. 1 (1998), p. 13, quoted in Du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace*, op. cit., p. 149.

<sup>979</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 162-174, Du Toit, *Die Nuwe Toekoms*, op. cit., pp. 150, 280-294 and Lodge in Klandermans et al, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>980</sup> See Klandermans et al, op. cit. for additional information on attitudes during the period 1994-2000.

<sup>981</sup> Heather Deegan, *The Politics of the New South Africa: Apartheid and After* (Longman: London, 2001), p. 134. See also Du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace*, op. cit., p. 148 and Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough*, op. cit., pp. 180-182.

<sup>982</sup> See Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough*, op. cit., pp. 180-185.

People of different racial and ethnic groups possessed very different expectations of their future in the new system. Afrikaners and Zulus were the least positive in terms of trust in the government. Among whites and Indians there was a decline in trust irrespective of the degree of pessimism about the future, whereas among Coloureds these two dimensions were linked. Coloured trust in the government grew during 1995-1996, declined sharply in 1997-1998, and then stabilized somewhat after the turning point, presumably because an anticipated worst case scenario did not materialize.<sup>983</sup>

Those among the Coloureds and Indians who did not approve of the government, did not trust the new government, or felt marginalized in the political system, formed the base of resilient support for both electoral and non-electoral means of opposition. Most Coloureds and Indians felt close to the National Party. However, a minority did feel close to the ANC. Both Coloureds and Indians had the largest proportion of people who did not feel close to any party.<sup>984</sup> A strong component of Coloured and Indian Muslims also fell into this group.

#### *Social identities, distance and trust*

Muslim identities and politics after 1994 were thus influenced by a multitude of geographical, economic, social, racial, ethnic and political factors. Both the Rainbow Nation and the African Renaissance discourses, supported by the ANC-leaning state media and government organs, contained strong unitarian themes that served to de-emphasize group politics and the importance of inter-group differences. However, group identities, social distance between groups and limited social trust between different groups persisted or re-emerged in the period after 1994 to an extent that often remained veiled within the dominant discourses.

A survey in 1996 found race, ethnicity and religion to be still more important markers for self-identification than the designation South African. In fact, only 13.5% of black respondents, 26.3% of whites and 31.6% of Coloureds considered themselves as South Africans first.<sup>985</sup> Racial segregation in residential areas, schools, the workplace and leisure sectors remained strong.

A survey in 1996 measuring social distance asked respondents with whom they felt they had most and least in common. The responses of whites and blacks showed a markedly strong attachment to their ethnic group. Of blacks, 34.4% felt closest to blacks in general but 15% felt closest to the Zulu ethnic group and 11% felt closest to the Xhosa ethnic group. Similarly, whites felt closest to Afrikaners (28%), then to whites in general (21.5%) then to white English-speaking people (18.2%) and then to co-religionists (8.3%).

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<sup>983</sup> Ibid., pp. 147-159.

<sup>984</sup> Ibid., p. 199.

<sup>985</sup> Hennie Kotzé, "Culture, Ethnicity and Religion: South African Perceptions of Identity", Occasional Papers (Konrad Adenauer Foundation: Johannesburg, April 1997), quoted in Pierre du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace: The Problem of Post-Settlement Violence* (Palgrave: New York, 2001), pp. 142-143.

In contrast, among Coloureds and Indians, and the predominant groups among Muslims, direct identification with the racial group, rather than an ethnic group, was much higher: 62.7% among Coloureds and 69% among Indians. Coloureds also indicated that they had least in common with three groups, namely with Zulus (29%), a black ethnic group concentrated in provinces away from the main Coloured area in the Cape, with (overwhelmingly black) immigrants from Africa (12.2%), and with black people (11.1%) and Xhosas (6%). Indians had least in common with Xhosas (18.6%), mostly settled in the Eastern Cape away from the main Indian areas in KwaZulu Natal and Gauteng, with immigrants from Africa (15.3%) and with black people (15%).<sup>986</sup>

On the issue whether blacks and whites would ever trust each other, by 1999 47% of blacks, 48% of Indians, 44% of Coloureds and 37% of whites still said this trust would never occur. An additional 26-28% in each group stated that they were not sure.<sup>987</sup> Seventy-two percent of whites, 59% of Indians, 22% of blacks and 19% of Coloureds stated that they would be bothered if their child married someone from another race, with 20% of blacks, 18% of Indians, 15% of Coloureds and 14% of whites in the middle category of being neither for nor against.<sup>988</sup> At the same time, the percentages showed that these two attitudes were not completely correlated: those with no problem with racially-mixed marriages in their family nevertheless perceived big gaps in political trust between the different groups.

In 2000, all minority groups felt that their group was better off than other groups. Among Coloureds, class became more important than ethnicity as a dimension of comparison. However, these attitudes also had an impact on Muslim attitudes to redistribution of wealth and opportunities. In the view of *Muslim Views*, Muslims constituted one of the more prosperous communities in SA and built their own institutions and facilities, but mostly with limited regard for the needs of neighbouring black communities. In the case of natural disasters, such as fires in Woodstock in 1998, a tornado in Manenberg, Gugulethu and Surrey in 1999, and a fire in Langa in 2000, Muslims did assist through their welfare organizations and mosque committees. However, their outreach, welfare and political organizations did not provide significant support individually or collectively.<sup>989</sup>

Religion as a basis of comparison with other groups increased from 6% to 18% among Coloureds, from 3-26% among Indians, and from 11-20% among whites. Among Coloureds, comparisons with blacks, whites and migrants generated grievances; Indians compared themselves with blacks and migrants, and blacks made comparisons with whites and other black ethnic groups. No group compared itself with Coloureds or

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<sup>986</sup> Ibid.

<sup>987</sup> Karen MacGregor, "The Reality Check Survey", *Indicator SA*, vol. 16 no. 2 (Winter 1999), pp. 21-28 on p. 26.

<sup>988</sup> Ibid.

<sup>989</sup> "The values of the Imam and the present challenges" (editorial), *Muslim Views*, September 2000, p. 32; "Muslims aid Langa fire victims" and "Muslims and social responsibility", *Muslim Views*, December 2000, pp. 3 and 48 respectively; "The deaths of Imam Dawood Lobi and sheikh Nazim Mohamed" and "Touched", *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 48.

Indians.<sup>990</sup> This may have been the result of their limited power or their intermediate socio-economic position or both factors.

Ethnic identity remained strong among all groups, but religious self-identification, the second most important marker after ethnicity among blacks, became more important than ethnic identification among Coloureds from 1997 onwards. The same happened among Indians, with religion being the strongest marker by 2000. Among whites, the levels of identification stayed relatively stable,<sup>991</sup> but both among Coloureds and Indians, the main groups to which Muslims belonged, religion became a stronger marker of identification. Among Coloureds, 10% also indicated they had most in common with co-religionists, and 10.3% did so among Indians.<sup>992</sup> This created a potential base for religious identity politics, in addition to politics influenced by racial identity and anti-migration sentiments.

While blacks as a group were the most actively involved in protests, the preparedness for peaceful protest increased among all three minority groups.<sup>993</sup> A 1996 survey also indicated widespread support among all religions for the following statement: “Although evil is everywhere, it can take possession of some people, and the community must get rid of such people, even if it means they have to be killed.” Muslims agreed most with the statement, with 52.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing.<sup>994</sup>

These attitudes constituted a strong potential support base for PAGAD-type vigilantism in a situation of highly perceived insecurity and the failure of the state to provide sufficient protection. They also linked up with the support for non-democratic means of registering political dissent among a strong minority of Coloured people.<sup>995</sup> Nevertheless, the support for PAGAD in particular among Indians (68%) and Coloureds (28%) differed,<sup>996</sup> and could be explained by the different relative proportion of Muslims among these groups in the province.

### **The dominant executive and Muslim options**

One means of promoting Islam and Muslim interests and ideals was a presence in sections of the executive and its bureaucratic and informal networks. When imam Hassan Solomons of the MJC was appointed in 1994 to serve in the justice and the trade and industry ministries, then MJC vice-president Shaykh Abdul Gamiet Gabier stated that he would be instrumental in implementing the aspirations of Muslims and the broader

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<sup>990</sup> Klandermans et al., op. cit., pp. 73-74, 89.

<sup>991</sup> Hennie Kotzé, “Culture, Ethnicity and Religion: South African Perceptions of Identity”, *Occasional Papers* (Konrad Adenauer Foundation: Johannesburg, April 1997), quoted in Du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace*, op. cit., pp. 142-143; Klandermans et al., op. cit., pp. 96-100, 105, 108.

<sup>992</sup> Du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace*, op. cit., pp. 143-144. The social distance exhibited towards black African immigrants was also high among whites (22.1%) and South African blacks (10%) and constituted a consistent social factor in SA.

<sup>993</sup> Klandermans et al., op. cit., pp. 216, 220.

<sup>994</sup> Du Toit, *South Africa's Brittle Peace*, op. cit., p. 146.

<sup>995</sup> “Majority of Coloured people are the least interested in politics, say Idasa survey”, *Cape Argus*, 18-19 May 1996, p. 18; “Coloured vote hold key to poll”, *Cape Argus*, 22 May 1996, p. 19.

<sup>996</sup> Jennifer Christie, “Safety At Any Cost: Community Perceptions of PAGAD”, *Indicator South Africa: Crime and Conflict*, no. 9 (Winter 1997), pp. 27-32 on p. 31.

underprivileged community.<sup>997</sup> In addition to a lobby, the MJC encouraged Muslims “to engage (or to get a foot into) and even to take positions in the present-day government structures. In this way the Muslim’s voice will be heard and possible change in favour of Muslims could be effected in a more expedient and effective manner.”<sup>998</sup>

This approach potentially dovetailed with that of Mandela and later Mbeki, who pursued a broad centrist ANC front. Prominent Muslims in the bureaucracy or national and local government were also able to achieve some gains. In terms of delivery to some areas in Rylands and Gatesville, local councillor Saleem Mowzer was able to achieve progress. ANC leader Ebrahim Rasool and others played an important role in resolving the land claims of residents, most of them Muslim, who had been resettled from District Six.

Dullah Omar stated with approval the appointment of various Muslims to important positions while he was minister of justice and kept MPL as an issue on the policy agenda. However, in debates about Islam and public morality, Muslim leaders in the ANC, such as Dullah Omar, Valli Moosa and Ebrahim Rasool did not make a strong stand representing the opposition among most Muslims to the secular legal space for abortion, prostitution, pornography, alcohol or gambling.

Muslims in the bureaucracy and government were also constrained by the politics of the Western Cape. While the province was effectively dominated by the opposition parties, the incentive of the national ANC government to divert significant or even proportionate resources to the province was absent, and policy continued to focus on the black poor. As a result, the largely Coloured and Indian Muslims would only receive a limited share in patronage. Muslims in government structures were able to make a difference in some local matters, but overall they were unable to obtain sufficient influence to affect Muslim concerns about violent crime, affirmative action and various socio-economic and developmental concerns in a major way.

A second means to influence politics was a Muslim group lobby, which the MJC itself also favoured.<sup>999</sup> In early 2000, pro-ANC and progressive cleric Rashied Omar concluded that South African Muslims had not used their considerable leverage to influence public policy and legislation in South Africa since 1994. He stated that the development of Muslims’ organisational ability was necessary to have any impact, specifically in the form of a Muslim parliamentary lobby. Such a lobby would monitor parliament, mobilise Muslim opinion on national issues, ensure that all policy and legislation received Muslim inputs in the form of submissions, gather the support of media and Muslim parliamentarians, and conclude alliances with other religious and civil society institutions on matters of common interest.<sup>1000</sup>

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<sup>997</sup> “Hassan Solomons appointed in ANC government”, *Muslim Views*, January 1995, p. 2. See also the interview with Hanief Tiseker in “Focus on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 30 no. 2 (1995), pp. 33-39 on p. 37.

<sup>998</sup> “Political involvement of SA Muslims”, *Ad-Da’wah*, vol. 8 no. 15 (November 2000), p. 1.

<sup>999</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 23 February 2000.

<sup>1000</sup> A. Rashied Omar, “A Call for the Formation of a Muslim Parliamentary Lobby” at <http://www.islam.org.za/Claremont/lobby.htm> dated 4 February 2000.

Boorhanol Islam argued that lobbying, public office representations and the conduct of Muslims had to be employed to promote Muslim interests and Islam's appeal.<sup>1001</sup> However, discussions on the formation of a Muslim lobby were unable to bridge the divisions in the community, and a representative or influential lobby did not emerge during the period 1994-2000. This deficient mobilization and organisation, combined with few bargaining chips, meant that the ANC or the NP or DA provincial governments were seldom effectively pressured or forced to prioritize Muslim communal concerns.

A third means to influence politics utilized by Muslims was extra-parliamentary community mobilization in the form of PAGAD, and a fourth means was the use of urban terrorism by a small group of Muslims.<sup>1002</sup> Both the MJC and the IUC favoured a fifth means, namely one political platform for all Muslims, but this did not materialize. However, the fluidity in Coloured and Indian politics in a transitional period, the relatively strong group identity, some resources and leadership among Muslim networks, and the increase in religious identification among Coloureds and Indians after 1994 allowed the emergence and sustainability of Islamist parties. These parties, although seriously deficient in terms of organization, provided an alternative basis for mobilization, in addition to the predominantly black-led and white-led parties.

### **The national elections of 27 April 1994**

#### *Muslims and non-Islamist parties*

Various groups, including Muslims, did not participate in the negotiations as a religious or identity group. In addition, the secular new order focused on individual rights, and this fact did not allow their participation in politics on the basis of a religious identity.<sup>1003</sup> The demographics underlying the particular political order meant that Muslims as a group had little chance of ensuring a place for Islam in the public sphere, or asserting their interests through the ballot box. In addition, Qibla and the leadership of the IUC were critical of the transition – it was too much of a compromise, they declared, preferring a continued struggle by a Muslim vanguard mobilizing the masses for a revolutionary new order.

These factors became the basis for both opposition by some Muslims to the ANC within the new system, a questioning of the system's legitimacy by others, and a debate about whether to participate in elections that would emerge in the run-up to the 1994 and 1999 national and the 1996 and 2000 local elections.<sup>1004</sup> In return, the ANC leadership used close cooperation and personal relationships with the MJC leadership and progressive Muslim clerics and academics to try and symbolically attach Muslim structures to the new order. No Coloured or Indian party contested the elections in the Western Cape and the choice for Muslims was therefore essentially to boycott the elections or to choose

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<sup>1001</sup> "The New South Africa", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 2 (1994), p. 3; "Elections: Boycott or Participation", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 30 no. 4 (1995), p. 3.

<sup>1002</sup> These approaches are discussed more fully in chapter five.

<sup>1003</sup> See chapter 8 for a more extensive discussion of the constitutional order.

<sup>1004</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 251 fn. 4; "IUC Delegates agree Muslims should not vote", *Al-Miftah* May/June 1999, p. 3, and Imam Ahmad Cassiem, "Editorial", *Al-Miftah*, June/July 2000, p. 6. For a more comprehensive discussion of the issue of electoral participation, see chapter 8.

between the ANC, any of the two new Islamist parties, the National Party or the Democratic Party.

The 1994 national elections evoked considerable domestic and international attention. They occurred under the auspices of an independent executive authority with its own budget and tasked to oversee that the elections remain fair and free. There was an open voters' roll based on approved identity documents and including many voters who were not bona fide South African citizens. Voting was only on the basis of proportional representation on a party list system. The party list system granted the party leadership the decisive power, rather than the local constituency.<sup>1005</sup>

The release of the top 200 list of ANC candidates evoked concerns among some Muslims about the number of SACP members. Some Muslims perceived the atheist ideology of the SA Communist Party, which formed an important part of the ANC, as constituting a potential threat. In addition, public morality was an issue, and this was a result of the ANC's support for gay rights and the right to abortion. These were the main concerns raised by Muslims at ANC meetings during the 1994 election campaign, as well as Arabic's status as a language and the status of Muslim personal law.<sup>1006</sup>

The ANC often tried to address these concerns by circumstantial arguments. It pointed out that at least 10% of members on its national election list were Muslims. Some IUC and AMP spokespersons countered that this did not mean that such candidates would serve Muslim interests.<sup>1007</sup> Mbeki addressed a meeting in the strongly Muslim area of Athlone and linked the ANC and Muslims by focusing not on common ideological themes, but on the role of individual Muslim activists in the struggle. He also stated that due to the diverse nature of SA society, Muslims would need to compromise on some issues.<sup>1008</sup>

However, some Muslim ANC candidates also engaged in re-interpretations of Islam to answer their critics. At a meeting in Cravenby, imam Gasant Solomons, an executive member of the MJC and a nominee on the ANC national election list, called on Muslims to be careful when quoting Quranic statements in support of non-participation on the basis of religious differences. The context and occasion of the revelation and the socio-political realities of the times should be taken into account, he said, exhorting Muslims to apply the principle of *maslaha* (general interest). At the same meeting, Ebrahim Rasool, at the time the ANC's election campaign coordinator, urged Muslims to see their declaration of faith as an injunction to fight the injustice of racism and apartheid in SA.<sup>1009</sup>

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<sup>1005</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 71-72.

<sup>1006</sup> Election poser for Muslims," *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 1, "Election Fever!", *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1, and Gairoonisa Paleker, "Political Courtship of Muslim intensifies," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 5.

<sup>1007</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1008</sup> "Election Fever!", *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1.

<sup>1009</sup> Gairoonisa Paleker, "Political Courtship of Muslim intensifies," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 5.

Rasool's Call of Islam (COI) attacked the Islamist parties based on their non-involvement in the pre-1994 struggle. The COI stated that there was a difference between Muslims fighting against white rule and what it called 'muslims' who sat and did nothing, and quoted the Quran that Allah had raised the *mujahidin* (fighters) above the *qa-din* (those who remained seated).<sup>1010</sup> The COI also declared that questioning whether Muslims could vote for a non-believer was an indirect way to oppose black rule. A black Christian ruler governing with justice and freedom of religion protected the early Muslims, and a ruler's justice should be the yardstick.<sup>1011</sup>

The Muslim Forum on Elections, formed in the middle of 1993 and comprising about 30 groups, expressed the progressive Muslim outlook in "The Muslim Declaration of April 27 elections": "When voting, choose wisely and according to your own conscience, and be mindful of the hopes and aspirations of the majority of the poor and oppressed in our country. Also remember the history of the struggle for justice and the upliftment of the masses of our people".<sup>1012</sup> This could hardly be construed as a call to support the NP.

Muslims supporting the National Party, the major opponent of the ANC in the Western Cape, focused on the perceived negative implications of ANC rule. For example, Anwar Ismail, an MP, emphasized fear of a future that would include escalating violence, a breakdown in law and order, confiscation of land and personal property, job losses from uncontrolled affirmative action, declining standards of education and endangerment of religious freedom and freedom of the right to differ. The NP presented itself as being strong on peace and the right of freedom of speech, freedom of movement and association, freedom to participate in peaceful political, social and religious activity, principles shared by Christians and Muslims.<sup>1013</sup>

Much earlier, in the 1920s, the cooperation between the NP and some Muslim groups was also based on a discourse around the social upliftment of Muslims, presumably with a Eurocentric framework of civilization as a yardstick.<sup>1014</sup> In many ways, the NP's discourse was again based on the idea that the new rulers would bring about a drop in civilized standards, but this time Christian and Muslim traditions were placed on an equal level, at least in public discourse.

Among Muslims before 1994, inter-faith political alliances against the system of white rule were largely based on a pragmatic approach. However, among a few COI activists, this was based on an acceptance of the theological legitimacy of other religions' liberatory discourses. In the discourses of pro-ANC Muslims after 1994, the major focus was still on the upliftment of the non-Muslim and Muslim poor, which received more attention than the upliftment of Muslims as such. However, the Western cultures of the white groups were recast as Eurocentric systems of privilege, and the differences with those of Muslims emphasized rather than bridged.

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<sup>1010</sup> Esack, *Qu'ran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 220.

<sup>1011</sup> Ibid., pp. 220-221.

<sup>1012</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 217.

<sup>1013</sup> "National Party: Why Muslims should vote for us", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 1 (1994), pp. 28-29.

<sup>1014</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 43, 46.



### *Islamist parties*

In 1910, an appeal to Coloured unity was launched to prevent the planned formation of exclusive Muslim political groups.<sup>1015</sup> In 1994, however, Coloured politics was in flux and fragmented, and no explicitly Coloured party had emerged. Within the Muslim community - one of the more cohesive identity groups in the broader Coloured and Indian community, which included a skilled middle class - political parties did emerge. Imam Achmad Cassiem of the IUC supported Muslim non-participation in the election, which left open the field for two other Islamist parties to emerge under the leadership of professionals and business people.

The Islamic Party (IP), a regionally-based party, was formed with barrister Sherif Mohamed as the national chairman and Dr. Abdullah Gamiieldien as leader. The IP leaders saw their party as a watchdog on current and future legislation, a lobby on issues of concern to Muslims, and a means of projecting a strong Islamic code in the political, social and economic spheres. It was opposed to policies that promoted pornography, homosexuality, abortion, gambling and intoxicants.

The IP, although regionally based, also addressed South African and even Southern African issues. It stated it wanted to promote Muslim unity and the establishment of a parallel Islamic court and legal system, and to expand the role of Islam, first in South Africa, and then in Southern Africa.<sup>1016</sup> The IP also indicated that it wanted to promote the Western Cape's economic development, and was willing to cooperate with parties that advocated a free, just and moral market economic system. It considered a hung parliament highly probable, which would lend small parties like the IP greater clout as a coalition partner.<sup>1017</sup>

The Africa Muslim Party (AMP) was founded in 1994 with Gulam Sabdia as chairman and Dr. Imtiaz Suleman as national leader. The six founding members included two professionals, three business people and one cleric, with five of the six from the northern Gauteng province. There was *ad hoc* dialogue between the AMP and Muslims who were against participation.<sup>1018</sup> The AMP official policy was the promotion of morality in general, which allowed the projection of Islam in the public sphere and religious freedom for all groups.

The AMP tried to address and bridge the concerns of its working class, lower middle and middle class constituents, favouring better education, health services, housing and free services to the poor and needy, as well as adult education and the promotion of small- and medium-sized businesses and new entrepreneurs. The AMP also supported the devolution of power from the center to the provinces and communities. This would have

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<sup>1015</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>1016</sup> "Islamic Party formed," *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 2; "Election fever," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1; "Islamic Party - 'Providing a Home for Muslims,'" *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1.

<sup>1017</sup> Naushad Omar, "Islamic Party: Muslims and the elections", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 1 (1994), pp. 30-31.

<sup>1018</sup> Interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

assisted Muslims in creating and maintaining their own space in the new political system to be dominated by a non-Muslim majority.<sup>1019</sup>

The AMP put up almost 60 candidates for the National Assembly elections and 25 for the Provincial Assembly elections in 1994. The AMP had a wider, national reach, whereas the IP was mainly a Western Cape-based party. During the election campaign the AMP, responding to an anonymous pamphlet that asked why there were two Muslim parties, stated that the parties had signed an agreement to form a coalition after the election. According to the AMP, the Independent Election Commission did not allow a merger before the election. After the elections, the AMP and IP merged into one party to be known as the Africa Muslim Party.<sup>1020</sup>

In general, the AMP was not noticeably active, proficient or well-organized. It had no established branch infrastructure, its own media or ample resources. The AMP also did not consult with the MJC leadership in the Cape. In September 1994, a new executive for the AMP was elected, with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem as chairman.<sup>1021</sup>

The leaders of the IP and AMP lacked the IUC leaders' record of involvement in the struggle against white rule, and were criticized for it by pro-ANC or pro-PAC Muslims. Faried Esack, a pro-ANC Muslim thinker, argued that a focus on Islam in the public sphere was less applicable in SA, given its complexities, and that these parties did not indicate how Islam could be translated into tangible and practical state policies. He stated that the idea of a Muslim political party was based on the false assumption that the socio-political interests of all Muslims were identical and reflected a response to socio-political insecurity.<sup>1022</sup> In his view, the focus of the Muslim parties on Islam in the public sphere was inattentive to the more important questions of poverty and exploitation.<sup>1023</sup>

*Muslim Views*, in contrast, argued for a focus on deeper Islamization of the community rather than support for the Islamist parties that may invite government displeasure. It stated that Muslims had survived enslavement, world wars, persecution and apartheid without the aid of Islamic parties. Allah would protect his faith and Muslims were obliged to simply practise his commandments and concentrate on spreading the message of Islam. Unplanned activities, even with the intention of stating the Islamic view to authorities, invited the rancour of the ruling groups who would perceive it to be a threat. An enlightened, mature public opinion had to be developed, imitation of Western cultural mores avoided, and protection of morality should occur through internal regeneration.<sup>1024</sup>

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<sup>1019</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>1020</sup> "Freedom at last", *Muslim Views*, April 1994, p. 1; "Muslim Political Parties Merge", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 6; interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

<sup>1021</sup> "Freedom at last", *Muslim Views*, April 1994, p. 1 and "Muslim Political Parties Merge", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 6 and interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

<sup>1022</sup> Esack, *Being*, op. cit., pp. 165-166.

<sup>1023</sup> Ibid., pp. 166-167, 178-179.

<sup>1024</sup> "The Franchise and Muslims", *Muslim Views*, April 1994, p. 16.

### *The election results*

In the 1994 elections, the votes of the parties for the National Assembly were distributed as follows: The ANC obtained 62.65% or 12 237 655 of the votes, which gave it 252 seats, and the PAC obtained 1.25% or 243 478 of the votes, which gave it 5 seats. The DP won 1.73% or 338 426 votes, which gave it seven seats, the Freedom Front 2.17% or 424 555 of the votes, with nine seats, while the NP obtained 20.39% or 3 983 690 votes, which gave it 82 seats. The party with an explicitly Christian approach, the ACDP, won two seats, based on 88 104 votes or 0.45% of the total.<sup>1025</sup>

Less than 14% of support for the NP came from black voters. Ninety four percent of ANC votes came from black people, compared to 85% of IFP votes.<sup>1026</sup> Less than 3% of whites voted for the ANC and less than 5% of blacks but two-thirds of Coloureds and Indians voted for the NP and DP, the traditionally white-led parties.<sup>1027</sup>

Nationally, the AMP put up nearly 60 candidates for the National Assembly and 25 for the Council of Provinces. Nationally, the AMP obtained 34,446 votes for the National Assembly or 0.18 % of the votes, and 15,655 in the Western Cape alone. The AMP obtained 51,773 votes in the Council of Provinces elections, with the AMP obtaining 20,954 votes in these elections in the Western Cape and the Islamic Party 16,762 votes, a total of 37,716 votes in the province alone.

While most Muslims voted for the NP, Muslims played an important role in the ANC. Twenty-three of the 400 new MPs were Muslim, three cabinet ministers and the regional leader of the ANC were Muslims.<sup>1028</sup> After the election, ANC provincial leader Dullah Omar said that the diversity of views in the Muslim community was so marked that it was difficult to move forward with the support of everyone.<sup>1029</sup>

No empirical studies have to date been conducted regarding the voting patterns of Indians in the Western Cape. Some of the trends noticed among Indians in Kwa-Zulu Natal may have been reflected among Indians in similar socio-economic categories in the Western Cape, especially pride in their origins within a literate civilisation, political apathy and non-participation in elections. Among the former group, almost 48% were undecided in 1999 and about 20% voted for the ANC and 10% for the NP, a drop from 28% and 34% respectively in 1994.

Among many Indians, the ANC's rule had become synonymous with corruption, inability to govern effectively and violent crime. Apathy and non-participation in elections was high, and emigration became an issue of regular discussion. However, while further research on this issue needs to be done, the Western Cape represented a much more

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<sup>1025</sup> South African Elections 1994 at <http://www.saweb.co.za/election/94.html>.

<sup>1026</sup> Du Toit, *Die Nuwe Toekoms*, op. cit., pp. 279, 381-382.

<sup>1027</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 75-78.

<sup>1028</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 223.

<sup>1029</sup> Shabodien Roomaney, "Dullah Omar – Our Minister of Justice," *Muslim Views*, May 1994, pp. 2, 3, 22.

congenial environment and anti-ANC attitudes were possibly less prevalent among Indians there than in KwaZulu Natal.<sup>1030</sup>

The support of most Coloureds for the NP was rooted in several factors. Coloureds had made major socio-economic advances under NP rule in the 1970s and 1980s, and many Coloureds feared losing the gains previously made. Even in MJC discussions many of these factors had been mentioned by those not in favour of an ANC vote.<sup>1031</sup> The perception of many Coloureds was that the post-1994 empowerment of black people would occur at their expense in the areas of employment, housing and welfare benefits. The perceived risk of criminal violence by groups of young blacks also reinforced existing attitudes of social disparity. For example, the gang rape of a Coloured woman by black PAC supporters and violence between black and Coloured train commuters further fuelled tensions on the eve of the elections.<sup>1032</sup>

Among Coloureds in general there was a new fluidity in the constellation of identities after 1994, without any particular identity discourse clearly hegemonic. On the one hand, there was a resurgence of ethnic mobilization incorporating socio-economic concerns and charismatic personality politics that were aimed at the ANC and blacks in many urban areas. Even within the ANC Youth League, 10 of 18 interim branches in the province dissolved shortly after 1994, with members stating they felt like strangers and complaining of black triumphalism. However, by 1995 the ANC had sidelined the often UDF-aligned lobby for non-racialism to appeal directly to Coloured interests, and there was a resurgence in group mobilization aimed particularly at the NP and white elites in many rural areas. In addition, several small new actors emerged who tried to gain a foothold, including independents and several smaller parties.<sup>1033</sup>

There are no available statistics to indicate a significant difference between the way Coloured Muslims and other Coloureds voted. Among the Coloureds, both the Muslim and non-Muslim middle class included a strong bloc of ANC supporters, while both the Muslim and non-Muslim Coloureds in predominantly working class areas mostly voted NP. A comparison of pre-election surveys and the actual voting results indicate that the major group among Coloured voters was not strongly NP or ANC, but undecided or floating, without strong loyalties.

The strong representation of Muslims in the ANC's provincial leadership did not prevent most Muslims from voting for the NP. Also, the positioning of the major clerical body, the MJC, to appear to be sympathetic to the ANC, and the opposition to the NP and DP

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<sup>1030</sup> Anand Singh, *Indians in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Concept Publishing Company: New Delhi 2005), pp. 48, 156. 155-158.

<sup>1031</sup> Ebrahim Rasool, "Unveiling the heart of fear", in *Now That We Are Free*, op. cit., pp. 54-58 on p. 57, Hermann Giliomee, "A politically incorrect view of non-racialism and majority rule", pp. 94-99 on pp. 96-97 and interview with Yagyah Adams, MJC public relations officer, 3 March 2000. See also Giliomee, *The Afrikaners*, op. cit., p. 647.

<sup>1032</sup> "Painful echoes of 1994 'swartgevaar' tactics", *Cape Argus*, 18-19 May 1996, p. 8.

<sup>1033</sup> Adhikari, *Not White Enough, Not Black Enough*, op. cit., pp. 177-183; Western, op. cit., p. 342; interview with Malcolm Taylor, a former ANC activist, Middle Party HQ, Durban Road Centre, Bellville, 21 November 2000.

among most Muslim media, including *Muslim Views*, Radio 786 and to some extent Voice of the Cape did not prevent most Muslims from voting for the NP. Thus, most Muslims did not heed the message of their major community leaders or their media.

A significant minority of Muslims did support the small Islamist parties, in spite of divisions, limited campaigning, a relatively weak organization and strong competition from much bigger organizations. This presaged a core of support for such parties and perhaps some growth potential. Islamist voting patterns showed a trend, also visible among voters for the Afrikaner ethnic nationalist party the Freedom Front, where supporters tended to vote for the communal party on a local level while voting for the bigger parties on a national level. The motivations may have been to make sure that the ANC come to power or alternatively to make sure that the ANC would face a big opposition party, in this case the NP. On the local level, the AMP benefited from this trend.

Religious networks, identity and socialization could have influenced the information and shape of messages received by Muslim voters, and their attitudes. However, religious affiliation clearly did not dominate voting allegiances, with most Muslims voting for the NP, ANC or even the DP, rather than the Islamist parties. Coloured and Indian group politics, socio-economic and political considerations related to leadership, and a strong government or opposition played the most important roles in Muslim voting patterns in 1994.

### **The local elections of 29 May 1996**

#### *Muslim participation*

The local election for the Cape Metropole occurred on 29 May 1996. The electoral task group coordinating elections had no executive authority, and the election budget was effectively controlled by government departments. The voter's roll was based on voter registration for bona fide South African citizens and voting was a combination of proportional representation and constituency representation for ratepayers associations and independents. No outside observers were given a formal role, and there was very little voter education and low participation.<sup>1034</sup>

There were three categories of local government, namely structures of rural local government, stand-alone towns and metropolitan structures with substructures, including Cape Town and Durban. While differing in capacity and skills, they shared a virtually static revenue base that was obliged to support three or four times as many people as before. Significant increases in local rates and taxes affecting mainly white taxpayers, and a boycott culture among the mainly black poor, deepened a crisis of delivery.<sup>1035</sup>

In the Cape Metropole, registered voters included about 517 000 Coloureds, 355 000 blacks and 382 000 whites, and they were to decide upon representation in 66 local

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<sup>1034</sup> Adam et al., op. cit., pp. 70-72.

<sup>1035</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

authorities under six larger sub-structures.<sup>1036</sup> The biggest substructure, Central, included Cape Town proper with several predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods and the black Crossroads township. In total, it had 221 000 Coloureds, 180 000 blacks and 89 000 whites. Muslims in the area were strongly represented on proportional party lists, namely 6 out of 30 NP candidates and 8 out of 28 ANC proportional list candidates, with 15 AMP candidates.

In the predominantly Coloured and Indian wards of the Cape Metropole as a whole, Muslims were well represented among ANC candidates, but they were absent among the ANC candidates in predominantly black wards. Muslims were also well represented among groups of independents in largely Coloured, Indian and white wards. In the Central substructure, for example, 2 out of 7 candidates of the Western Cape Community Organisation, 2 out of 11 in the Cape Independent Alliance and 1 out of 8 in the Independent Civic Alliance were Muslim. One group, the Joint Civic Initiative, consisted of 3 Muslims only, and prominent Muslims like Dr. Achmat Davids of Boorhaanol Islam were among the independent candidates.<sup>1037</sup>

In the 1996 local elections Qibla and the IUC still advocated a boycott approach. However, the MJC, *Muslim Views* and the more traditionalist *Boorhaanol Islam* were mostly in favour of participation. *Boorhaanol Islam* stated that for Muslims as a minority it was imperative to express their political will, that representation would serve the medium- and longer-term interest of the Muslim community, and that Muslims could oppose at the local level many vices and be in a position to fashion a society reflecting their values.<sup>1038</sup> Most Muslims would not follow the boycott approach.

#### *Muslims and the non-Islamist parties*

The Muslim candidates in the mainstream parties may have served as representatives of their communities. However, they seldom openly and actively campaigned for a greater role for Islam in the public domain, even though religious identity had become a stronger factor among Coloureds and Indians after 1994. In contrast, Western Cape minister Peter Marais, a Coloured Christian in the NP, emphasized the sovereignty of God and questioned the constitution's non-recognition of the power of God.<sup>1039</sup>

Muslim ANC leaders preferred to state that their party's program already reflected Islamic values of socio-economic welfare and political justice, marginalizing or ignoring any connection between Islam and the state or Muslim concerns about the constitutional space for conduct prohibited in Islam.<sup>1040</sup> This position was criticized by some Muslims, including high-profile Muslim visitors.<sup>1041</sup>

<sup>1036</sup> "All you need to know about the local elections", *Cape Argus*, 18-19 May 1996, p. 6.

<sup>1037</sup> *Cape Argus*, 6 May 1996, pp. 6, 7, 8, 11 and 14.

<sup>1038</sup> "Elections: Boycott or Participation," *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 30 no. 4 1995 p. 3.

<sup>1039</sup> "Fiery speech raises ANC hackles", *Cape Argus*, 30 May 1996, p. 1.

<sup>1040</sup> Fu'ad Rahman, "The New Constitution – at what price?", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, pp. 4-5.

<sup>1041</sup> "Non-Muslim political parties Islamically ineffective", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 2 and "Many Muslims not Representative of the Ummah", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 3.

The local elections campaign occurred at a time when PAGAD had reached prominence in the Muslim community: a big protest march of 2000 people to Parliament was held on 11 May 1996. The local election campaigns had strong national, ethnic and territorial overtones. Both Nelson Mandela and FW de Klerk were used by their parties to promote the campaigns. The government acknowledged that there had been an increase of 10-20% in the number of murders, thefts and burglaries nationally. Crime, corruption and insecurity were important concerns among all minority groups, and both the ANC and the opposition parties focused on this group of issues, with jobs being the second important theme.<sup>1042</sup>

The ANC endeavoured to conduct damage control to counter its image as an unsuccessful crime fighter. ANC ministers acknowledged corruption among law enforcement personnel and some local ANC candidates emphasized their involvement in community forums to combat crime. The NP's provincial minister for security, Gerald Morkel, was accused of being insensitive to the problem of gangsterism, while almost a week before the election the deputy defence minister, Ronnie Kasrils, unveiled a comprehensive new anti-crime plan.<sup>1043</sup> The office of Ebrahim Rasool also initiated an investigation by the Office for Serious Economic Crimes against Abe Williams, former minister of welfare and population development, due to alleged irregularities with the awarding of contracts. Williams then resigned from the Cabinet.<sup>1044</sup>

Accusations and actual incidents of intimidation by ANC and NP supporters occurred. Western Cape NP premier Hernus Kriel was prevented from entering several black townships, while at one ANC meeting some Coloured NP supporters shouted "go home, black" at Mandela, a Xhosa from the Eastern Cape.<sup>1045</sup> Peter Marais, MEC for Local Government, stated on 12 March that brown people, being the majority in the Western Cape, should receive preferential treatment during the implementation of affirmative action.<sup>1046</sup>

A survey by the Independent Newspapers group a few days before the elections showed that 48% of Coloureds thought they should have their own party for representation and 22% actually feared Mandela as president. There was also acquiescence between the views of most Muslims and most Coloureds on abortion and the removal of the death penalty, with 72% of Coloured respondents opposing abortion and 83% supporting capital punishment. At the same time, Coloureds in general and Muslims in particular were politically deeply divided over which party to support.<sup>1047</sup>

<sup>1042</sup> "Crime soars in W Cape, insurance claims show", *Cape Argus*, 19 April 1996, p. 1; "Mbeki targets jobs and crime as major priorities", *Cape Argus*, 16 April 1996, p. 1; "DP puts focus on crime in election fight", *Cape Argus*, 17 April 1996, p. 4; "Election pot brims over with the boiling issues", *Cape Argus*, 20-21 April 1996, p. 2; ANC fullpage advertisements, *Cape Argus*, 17 May 1996, pp. 17, 19.

<sup>1043</sup> "Corruption crippling SA justice system, says Omar", *Cape Argus*, 16 May 1996, p. 1; "Minister admits 19 arrests in elite police unit", *Cape Argus*, 17 May 1996, p. 1; "Gang violence – minister accused of 'insensitivity'", *Cape Argus*, 16 May 1996, p. 13; *Cape Argus*, 21 May 1996, p. 3.

<sup>1044</sup> <http://152.111.1.251/argief/berigte/dieburger/1996/02/23/2/5.html>.

<sup>1045</sup> "Mandela's plea for religious tolerance", *Cape Argus*, 15 May 1996, p. 4; "Intimidation threat to poll", *Cape Argus*, 18-19 May 1996, p. 1; "Accusations of intimidation fly in Western Cape", *Cape Argus*, 25-26 May 1996, p. 4.

<sup>1046</sup> <http://152.111.1.251/argief/berigte/dieburger/1996/03/13/10/17.html>.

<sup>1047</sup> "Poll shows Cape race divide", *Cape Argus*, 27 May 1996, p. 17.

The widespread support among Coloured Muslims for PAGAD at that stage also supplemented the high dissatisfaction among Coloureds found in surveys by the Institute for Democracy in South Africa and the University of the Western Cape. According to the IDASA survey, Coloureds had the lowest political interest and participation, high support for non-democratic political means of registering dissent, and almost 50% support for non-elected leaders. Less than one-third felt that citizens should pay their rents and rates to local councils. This was combined with a low trust in and a dismal view of the ability to influence the black-dominated government.<sup>1048</sup>

### *Islamist parties*

The AMP was the only Islamist party to contest the local municipal election in 1996. A breakaway after a merger, the United Muslim Party, claimed to prepare for the general election, while the Pan South Africa Islamic Party (PSAIP) also claimed to be grassroots-driven and planned to contest the general election.<sup>1049</sup> The AMP had to contend with a feeling among potential supporters that the ANC was still a liberation movement, while both the ANC and the NP could also provide some patronage benefits.<sup>1050</sup>

The AMP emphasized its support for a total devolution of power to autonomous provinces and communities, which would have ‘absolute and total control’ over their resources and the use of their taxes. The hold of multinational companies on economies had to be removed and people empowered economically on a provincial and community level, while prioritising small business. Speculation on the stock exchange would be prohibited by the AMP. The number of newspapers would be limited “for the sake of ecology and conservation,” while the broadcast media had to devote at least half its time to educating and instilling moral values, with depictions of sex and violence to be banned.<sup>1051</sup>

Two even smaller parties, both led by people from Muslim families, also participated in the local elections. The People’s Liberation Party (PLP) led by Shaheed Noor effectively combined certain Islamic and redistributionist economic themes. It favoured a cancellation of the huge national debt incurred by the “illegitimate” NP government, a prohibition on bank interest, an overhaul of the tax system, a fairer redistribution of wealth and “all God-given natural resources presently in the hands of illegal possessors”, as well as the death penalty.<sup>1052</sup>

The Trotskyite and secular Workers International Vanguard League (WIVL) of Shaheed Mohamed considered the COSATU trade union as Thatcherite, the SA Communist Party as an enemy of the workers, and the new government as a self-enriching elite. The WIVL was in favour of nationalisation without compensation, the scrapping of debt incurred

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<sup>1048</sup> “Majority of Coloured people are the least interested in politics, say Idasa survey”, *Cape Argus*, 18-19 May 1996, p. 18; “Coloured vote hold key to poll”, *Cape Argus*, 22 May 1996, p. 19.

<sup>1049</sup> *Muslim Views*, October 1995, p. 6.

<sup>1050</sup> Telephone interview with Tasneem Kalam, 23 November 2000.

<sup>1051</sup> “Small challengers with big ideas”, *Cape Argus*, 19 May 1996, p. 12.

<sup>1052</sup> *Ibid.*



under the NP, massive public works to create jobs, worker and gender rights, and a centralized state built on revolutionary workers councils.<sup>1053</sup>

### *The election results*

Despite a strong media campaign, failures in voter education, fear of registration, concerns about the secrecy of the ballot, apathy, indifference and lack of knowledge contributed to a low voter registration and turnout. While nationally only 79.2% of eligible voters registered in the 1996 local elections, 88.22% did so in the Western Cape, with just 59.79% of these participating in the elections in the Western Cape, compared to 48.75% nationally. In the Central substructure, which had the largest concentration of Muslim voters, 57.08% of voters participated.<sup>1054</sup> In the predominantly Coloured and white provinces of the Western and Northern Cape, however, 60% and 55% of the voters voted respectively.

The ANC obtained 436 372 or 37.1% of the votes in the Western Cape which figure, apart from the Zulu-dominated KwaZulu Natal, was the lowest percentage in the various provinces, while it obtained 58.02% of the votes nationally. The NP obtained 567 907 or 48.2% of the votes, compared to 18.02% nationally. The DP obtained 52 785 or 3.2% of the votes, compared to 13.48% nationally. The ACDP increased its local vote to 1.7% of the vote in the province and 0.77% nationally, but local ratepayers organisations also obtained 23 387 or 2% of the vote in the province and 1.47% nationally.<sup>1055</sup>

Support for the ANC among rural Coloured voters group in the province increased from 9% in 1994 to 33% in 1996. The almost threefold increase in ANC support was largely based on a significant breakthrough among these voters in towns and rural areas, where strong racial and socio-economic demarcations between whites and other groups had become more of a political issue since 1994. Otherwise, the basic issues of socio-economic and identity politics in the province had remained the same and reinforced the political divisions of previous elections.

Among Coloureds and Indians the percentage of floating or independent voters was still high, at 44% and in excess of 50%, respectively.<sup>1056</sup> In addition, as before, a large part of the Coloured population did not participate, which Mandela ascribed to feelings of alienation.<sup>1057</sup>

Of the 42 members in the Cape Provincial Legislature in 1996, 14 belonged to the ANC and 23 to the NP. Of the 14 ANC members, at least three were Muslims, namely Ebrahim Rasool, Tasneem Essop and Yusuf Gabru. Of the 23 NP members, two were Muslim, namely Mali Hoza and Anwar Ismail. In 1998, Mali Hoza also joined the ANC, which then had four Muslim representatives. In 1999, 18 of the 42 members of the Legislature

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<sup>1053</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1054</sup> Local Government Elections Task Group, *1996 ETG Report on Local Government Elections in South Africa 1995/1996*, pp. 230, 257-261.

<sup>1055</sup> Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>1056</sup> Rachel Prinsloo, "Politics of Coloured identity", *Political Monitor*, vol. 14 no. 3 (Spring 1997), pp. 21-24 on p. 23.

<sup>1057</sup> "PAGAD marches on airport not allowed - Mandela", *Cape Times*, 9 December 1996, p. 1.

were ANC. Four of them were Muslims, namely Ebrahim Rasool, Tasneem Essop, Yusuf Gabru and Riyadh Williams.

The AMP did not have its own media or a network of branches, nor did it conduct an extensive campaign. Nevertheless, it won one seat on the city council based on a proportional vote. Nooroelanwar Saffodien would have been the representative, but the position clashed with his business interests. He was replaced and other people invited to serve, but they declined. Hassiem then assumed the position.<sup>1058</sup>

## **The national elections of 2 June 1999**

### *The election campaign*

The 1999 elections were arranged differently from those in 1994. Compared to the 1994 elections, the preparations were better, but at the price of huge spending.<sup>1059</sup> In the run-up to the elections, the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), using taxpayers' money, placed inserts on the ANC government's achievements in major newspapers. The final power to select provincial premiers also passed from the provincial ANC to Mbeki.<sup>1060</sup>

Voters were not only required to attend a polling station to cast their vote, as in 1994, but had to register to vote before the actual day of the election.<sup>1061</sup> Also as a result of different documents being used in different areas before 1994, by March 1999, 91% of ANC supporters had the correct identity documents to register as voters, while only 73% of NNP supporters in the Western Cape had such documents.<sup>1062</sup> More than 19.3% of eligible voters did not register to vote, both nationally and in the Western Cape, and of the about 80% who registered, 75% or 60% of eligible voters participated. Less than 50% of those in the 18-20 age category registered.<sup>1063</sup>

The ANC campaign emphasized the government's achievements and its program to create jobs, provide housing and services, and combat crime and corruption. The New National Party (NNP), the successor to the NP as a party, had a less adversarial approach than the DP, focusing on issues such as crime and unemployment. Instead of portraying the ANC itself as a huge threat, it emphasized an inclusive and cooperative approach with government.

The NNP's uncharismatic new leader, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, enjoyed limited support even in party strongholds. FW de Klerk, who had a strong standing among many Coloured voters, was therefore used in media advertisements at the end of the

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<sup>1058</sup> Interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

<sup>1059</sup> Martin Pabst, *Developments of the South African spectrum of political parties*, lecture at conference on "South Africa after the elections", Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung, Wildbad Kreuth, 22 September 1999, pp. 1-2.

<sup>1060</sup> Patrick Laurence, "Democracy or Control?: South Africa after the Election", *Indicator SA* vol. 16 no. 2 (Winter 1999), pp. 29-32 on pp. 31-32.

<sup>1061</sup> Deegan, op. cit., pp. 167-168, 174.

<sup>1062</sup> Kotzé, "The New National Party", op. cit., p. 169.

<sup>1063</sup> Deegan, op. cit., p. 169.

campaign.<sup>1064</sup> The NP's support base among whites had already declined from 48% in 1994 to 27% by November 1995 and 6% by March 1999. White voter loyalty became much more fluid, enabling the DP to win over many former NNP supporters.<sup>1065</sup>

The DP aimed at displacing the New National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party as the official opposition. Its campaign slogan of "Fight Back" stressed resistance to violent crime and affirmative action, both attributed to government inaction or policies, and was aimed at winning the support of those who were dissatisfied with the course of events in NP and ANC policies.

The DP also emphasized the need to prevent an ANC two-thirds majority, which would allow that party to change the constitution and its civil rights guarantees, and to exercise total power. In addition, its message to Coloureds was that they were still being discriminated against, this time by black affirmative action and preferential housing and services. The ANC in the Western Cape produced a counter-slogan "Don't Fight Blacks", implying that the DP's opposition to the ANC was racist.<sup>1066</sup>

### *Muslim dynamics*

The debate among Muslims on the relationship between Islam and the new system again emerged in 1999, although perhaps with less intensity or uncertainty than in 1994.<sup>1067</sup> At its annual convention of 14-16 May 1999, the IUC called on Muslims not to vote. Imam Achmad Cassiem said that the political parties contesting the elections, including Azapo and the PAC, did not fulfil the aspirations of the oppressed masses. According to him, "Islam does not endorse a component government in which Muslims may vote for a party that espouses only some policies that are Islamically acceptable."

In contrast, the MJC announced that it was permissible for Muslims to vote, that religious freedom was enshrined in the constitution and that Muslims should take advantage of this. To isolate Muslims from power sharing at all levels of government would be devastating for the political future of Muslims. The Islamic Council of SA (ICSA), said that Muslims should have the freedom to exercise the right to vote.<sup>1068</sup>

No Muslim media supported the DP or the NNP, but some were clearly against them. *Muslim Views* had a prominent picture of Ebrahim Rasool and Thabo Mbeki on the frontpage of its election 1999 issue. The *Muslim Views* editorial said that Muslims could not morally justify a vote for the NNP and DP, since these parties were tainted with a history of direct or indirect participation in the crimes of apartheid. Parties like the ANC, UDM, PAC, SOPA and AZAPO were described as having a legitimate basis for the Muslim vote.<sup>1069</sup>

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<sup>1064</sup> Kotzé, "The New National Party", op. cit., pp. 170-171.

<sup>1065</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1066</sup> Deegan, op. cit., pp. 182-184.

<sup>1067</sup> See chapter 8.

<sup>1068</sup> "Muslims debate election issues," *Muslim Views*, May 1999, p. 2

<sup>1069</sup> "A legitimate vote is an Islamic vote," *Muslim Views*, May 1999, p. 30.

Yagyah Adams, the MJC's public relations official, also helped Ebrahim Rasool to gain access to the Muslim community in the period 1996-1999 by facilitating speaking opportunities for him at about 20 mosques. ANC advertisements in the *Muslim Views* focused on rooting out corruption and punishing criminals, rather than job creation, reflecting lower middle class and middle class concerns.<sup>1070</sup>

The People's Liberation Party of Fadeel Hassen and Shahied Noor also placed advertisements, indicating that it embraced the spirit and focus of the Quran. The PLP stated that its supporters should vote for it provincially and support the Abolition of Income Tax and Usury Party of Stephen Goodson nationally, but both parties lost their deposits.<sup>1071</sup> Once again, the AMP had no real media or branch organization, and its campaign only consisted of distributing pamphlets and putting up posters.

### *The election results*

About 16, 228, 462 of a total of 18,172, 751 registered voters participated in the 1999 elections.<sup>1072</sup> Three and a half million fewer people of voting age participated than in 1994, an actual turn-out of about 66%. Compared to participation by almost 70% of blacks, only 53% of whites, 48% of Coloureds and 41% of Indians participated. Among whites, 1.1 m voters abstained, among blacks 1.5m, with a high percentage of abstentions among Coloureds and Indians.<sup>1073</sup>

Pabst interprets this phenomenon as a loss of faith in the political system.<sup>1074</sup> However, in some cases other factors were also present. Among whites, a strong group, possibly a majority among Afrikaners, had not supported the process of the handover of power that had started in the early 1990s, or never trusted that politics would serve any purpose in a one-party dominant system ruled by the ANC.

In the case of Coloureds and Indians, the phenomenon of political apathy and limited participation had also existed during the tricameral system. The lack of participation by some of these voters after 1994 could perhaps be more accurately explained as apathy and skepticism *ab initio* because of their limited influence in any system where they formed a clear minority. These tendencies also fuelled support among Muslims for PAGAD's vigilante activities.

The ANC almost won a two-thirds majority in the general election of 1999, while the DP replaced the NP as the official opposition, but with less than 50% of the votes that the NP had won in 1994.<sup>1075</sup> The ANC won 66.4% of the vote or 266 seats compared to the 252 of 1994 and the DP 9.6% or 38 seats compared to 2.2% or 7 seats in 1994. The NNP

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<sup>1070</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1999, p. 10, 11.

<sup>1071</sup> *Muslim Views*, May 1999, p. 12.

<sup>1072</sup> Deegan, op. cit., p. 178.

<sup>1073</sup> Pabst, op. cit., pp. 2-3 and Lodge, "South African politics and collective action", op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>1074</sup> Pabst, op. cit., pp. 2-3.

<sup>1075</sup> Rupert Taylor and Thabisi Hoeane, "Interpreting the South African election of June 1999", *Politikon* vol. 26 no. 2 (November 1999), pp. 133-144 on p. 135.

collapsed with 6.9% of the vote or 28 seats compared to 20.4% of the vote or 82 seats in the earlier election. This result was due to the strong image of DP leader Tony Leon, who drew many white supporters from the NP. In addition, the absence of De Klerk as leader and the uninspiring leadership of his successor drove away both white and Coloured voters. In addition, the ANC's more centrist positioning drew more Coloured voters.<sup>1076</sup>

The Freedom Front (FF), an ethnic Afrikaner party, gained only 3 seats compared to 9 in 1994, and the Pan Africanist Congress also gained 3 seats only. The religious-conservative African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) rose from 0.5% to 1.4% of the vote. The system was based on proportional representation and the candidates were based on a list compiled by the party.<sup>1077</sup>

In the provincial legislature of the Western Cape the NNP won 38.39% of the votes and 17 seats, compared to 53.25% of the votes in 1994. The DP won 11.91% of the votes and 5 seats, compared to 6.64% of the votes in 1994. In 1999 the AMP stood as the Africa Moral Party, trying to attract non-Muslims as well, but won less than 10,000 votes.<sup>1078</sup> In contrast, the African Christian Democratic Party, which also had black and white support, again increased its vote percentage to 2.79% of the votes and 1 seat, compared to 1.20% of the votes in 1994.

The ANC won 42.07% of the votes and 18 seats, compared to 33.01% of the votes in 1994, an increase of 9%. It became the strongest party in the province, but in opposition to the DP/NNP coalition government. As in 1994, there was a difference between voting on the national and provincial level, with greater support for the FF and NNP on a provincial level, whereas the converse was true for the ACDP, DP and ANC.<sup>1079</sup>

The ANC's progress in the Western Cape was due, among other factors, to the influx of more black voters to the province and some inroads among previously floating Coloured voters.<sup>1080</sup> The black parties outside the ANC that gained some support, mostly outside the Western Cape, were all concentrated around an ethnic core constituency in a particular region, namely the United Democratic Movement (UDM) with a Xhosa base in the Eastern Cape, the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) with a Tswana base in North West province, and the Inkatha Federal Party (IFP) with a Zulu base in KwaZulu Natal.<sup>1081</sup>

However, the view that the election results were only a racial group census with voting based on racial identities does not in itself explain the strong support for the ANC among

<sup>1076</sup> Hennie Kotzé, "The New National Party in the 1999 election: end of the road or a new beginning?", *Politikon*, vol. 26 no. 2 (1999), pp. 167-177 and Willie Breytenbach, "The New National Party" in Andrew Reynolds (ed.), *Election '99 South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki* (James Currey: Oxford, 1999), pp. 115-124 on p. 119.

<sup>1077</sup> Deegan, op. cit., p. 178 and Pabst, op. cit., pp. 2-4.

<sup>1078</sup> Interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

<sup>1079</sup> Deegan, op. cit., p. 196.

<sup>1080</sup> Deegan, op. cit., pp. 183-185 and Pabst, op. cit., pp. .

<sup>1081</sup> Pabst, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

middle class Coloureds and Indians in the Western Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal, and among Coloureds in small Cape rural towns, Karoo and West Coast villages.<sup>1082</sup> In the Northern Cape, Coloured support for the ANC increased substantially, also based on the premier Manne Dipico's track record on inclusive delivery and patronage.<sup>1083</sup> The apparent resurgence of ethno-regional politics indicated by the success of the United Democratic Movement and the United Christian Democratic Party also does not explain the decline of the support of the Afrikaner nationalist Freedom Front and the Inkatha Freedom Party.

In the 1999 election, correlations existed between income categories and voting behaviour. Habib and Naidu argue<sup>1084</sup> that the Indian and Coloured electoral blocs were not homogeneous, which is accurate; but class considerations did play a role. On the other hand, it would be too strong a statement to declare that the electoral behaviour was far more influenced by class variables than by racial considerations.

Most Indian and Coloured households fell into the socio-economic category of less than R2,500 per month earnings. According to Habib and Naidu, the reluctance of lower income Coloureds and Indians to vote for the ANC stemmed from their vulnerability in the post-apartheid economy. Their perceived vulnerability was related to the combined effect of affirmative action, which did not have such an impact on self-employed or better-educated people in these groups, and the greater competition between different groups' working-class communities in an environment of declining economic opportunities.<sup>1085</sup>

This begs the question why at least a substantial minority among the Coloured and Indian middle class still did not support the ANC, and why support for the ANC increased among rural working-class Coloureds facing entrenched Afrikaner and white English-speaking communities and elites in the Western Cape. Clearly, apart from choices based on the personalities of leaders, ethnic and racial identities and perceived interests also had some influence on voting patterns. The AMP was seriously affected by the political apathy among many Coloured voters and its lack of proper organization, and it performed badly, but in general, issue- and religion-based politics remained of marginal importance among other groups as well.

## **The local elections of 5 December 2000**

### *Muslims and the non-Islamist parties*

In the local elections of 2000, Muslims were strongly represented among the candidates. There were seven Muslim candidates on the DA's proportional list of 100 candidates, with one among the first ten. The ANC followed a topdown approach to candidate

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<sup>1082</sup> Taylor and Hoeane, op. cit., pp. 139-141.

<sup>1083</sup> Ibid., pp. 138-141.

<sup>1084</sup> Adam Habib and Sanusha Naidu, "Election '99: was there a 'Coloured' and 'Indian' vote?", *Politikon* vol. 26 no. 2 (1999), pp. 189-199 on p. 194.

<sup>1085</sup> Habib and Naidu, op. cit., pp. 195-197.

selection,<sup>1086</sup> with ten Muslim candidates on the ANC's list, of whom three were among the first ten. Among the candidates in 100 wards were 12 Muslims for the DA, of which one, Farouk Daniels, died during the campaign, and ten for the ANC.

Of the 32 independent candidates, six were Muslim. As in 1996, ratepayers associations dominated by Muslims and Muslim independents also played a role in the local election. For example, Dagwood Khan, formerly of the ANC and the UDM, stood as an independent candidate in the local elections with the support of a local Anglican parish and the Hidayatul Islam and Facreton mosque.<sup>1087</sup> Yusuf Waggie, a former NNP councilor, stated in his election advertisement he was an independent candidate for ward 76, and appealed to both Muslim and Christian Coloured voters by mentioning that he had been instrumental in the allocation of mosque and church sites in the Mitchell's Plain Area.<sup>1088</sup>

Muslims were also well-represented among the party candidates. The PAC and ANC mayoral candidates were Muslim. More than 13% of the proportional list candidates of the Cape People's Congress (CPC) and the Middle Party, two small Coloured parties, were Muslim. The KwaZulu Natal-centred Inkatha Freedom Party nominated its three Muslim candidates for several wards. The ACDP, AZAPO, small Green Party and the UDM fielded no Muslim candidates.<sup>1089</sup> One out of four Muslim candidates and occasionally one out of three candidates were women. The AMP had 11 women among its 40 candidates, which figure was proportionately slightly better than the proportion of the ACDP.<sup>1090</sup>

All the main parties tried to reach out to Muslim voters. The ANC, NNP and DP all indicated that it viewed PAGAD as a threat to the security of the Western Cape. However, each of them indicated that it would accept bona fide PAGAD members into its party. The ANC did so with the proviso that they did not endorse violent methods. All three parties agreed that the documented burial grounds of Muslim saints were sacred and inviolable. And all three parties supported the right of Muslims to conduct the call to prayer five times daily from their mosques, the NNP with the proviso that the local authority had to approve it as well.

On other issues, the position of parties also allowed Muslims to pursue the implementation of their values. On the issue whether a party would support the promotion of Muslim-friendly taxis, i.e. for females only, without any alcohol use and pop music, the ANC said it would not stop individual taxi-drivers who wanted to act this way, and the DP and NP supported such freedom if it was in accordance with the Constitution. All three parties also supported the declaration of more dog-free zones on beaches and in parks and hiking trails, the DP and NNP with the proviso that the guidelines of local authorities should also be used. In addition, all three parties supported

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<sup>1086</sup> Tom Lodge, "The South African local government elections of December 2000", *Politikon*, vol. 28 no. 1 (2001), pp. 21-46 on pp. 28-29.

<sup>1087</sup> "Church supports Muslim candidate in local elections," *Muslim Views*, October 2000, p. 8.

<sup>1088</sup> Pamphlet of Yusuf Waggie and interview at Waggie's home, Mitchells Plain, 25 November 2000.

<sup>1089</sup> *Cape Times*, 25 October 2000 pp. 6-7; Final Candidate List, 7 November 2000.

<sup>1090</sup> Final Candidate List, 7 November 2000.

the provision of alcohol-free areas in restaurants, the DP and NNP on the explicit basis of freedom for private enterprise.<sup>1091</sup>

The fluidity in Coloured politics remained visible during these local elections. Disillusioned Coloured ANC supporters founded the Middle Party. Helderberg Civic Organization and the CPC were other Coloured groupings. In an interview, ex-ANC activist and Middle Party leader Malcolm Taylor claimed that Thabo Mbeki considered the Coloured community as anti-black and that after 1994 black ANC supporters were mobilized, outvoted those activists - often Coloured - who did the work, and helped to install black candidates. The MP's Muslim candidates made no special demands and there was an open discussion whether a meeting would be opened by Christian prayer or not. One Christian candidate, Ivan Wrenn, also had Muslim family members and a Muslim agent.<sup>1092</sup>

Increased political self-assertion by Muslims on the basis of a communal and religious identity was at least partially a response to the fluidity in Coloured politics. In January 2000 the ANC, in response to indications of discontent among some Muslims, placed a full-page advertisement in the *Muslim Views* on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Fitr festival, under the heading "Let us not marginalize ourselves!"

Under a subheading "ANC Call to Muslims," the advertisement said: "Muslims enjoy constitutional protection of their religion and freedom to worship. At the same time we call on Muslims in South Africa not to segregate or marginalize themselves. You must participate together with others in building the new South African nation with new acceptable moral and social values."<sup>1093</sup>

Branches rather than the national organization formed the basis of a particularly successful local ANC campaign. The Thornhill ANC branch ensured Saleem Mowzer's success. Mowzer ran a good campaign, emphasizing his authority, accessibility and delivery.<sup>1094</sup> Posters were put up widely, extolling his contribution in bringing people a hall, a library, speed bumps and brighter lights. The *Muslim Views* also gave prominence to an article by the ANC Thornhill Branch and contained a full-page ANC advertisement signed by Thabo Mbeki.<sup>1095</sup> Lodge states that the ANC was only ward-specific in its campaign in the Cape.<sup>1096</sup>

However, while Mowzer ran a good campaign and the ANC would do well, the Democratic Alliance (DA), formed from the New National Party and the Democratic

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<sup>1091</sup> "Local Government Election 2000," *Boorhaanol Islam* October 2000, pp. 48-51.

<sup>1092</sup> Interview with Malcolm Taylor, Middle Party HQ, Durban Road Centre, Bellville, 21 November 2000.

<sup>1093</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 2000, p. 11.

<sup>1094</sup> Farid Sayed, the editor of *Muslim Views*, claims that on the Saturday before the election, a stall trader in scrap metal went with a loudspeaker through the area and said "Vote against Mowzer – he only works for the rich Indians." According to Sayed, this tactic backfired and those Indians who were disillusioned with the ANC and crime voted for Mowzer on an ethnic basis. Interview with Farid Sayed, Gatesville, 9 December 2000.

<sup>1095</sup> *Muslim Views*, December 2000, pp. 32 and 33.

<sup>1096</sup> Lodge, "The South African local government elections of December 2000", op. cit., pp. 21-46 on p. 31.



Party, set the election agenda. As in the 1996 local elections, the campaign was mainly fought on national issues, not local ones. Ethnicity seemed to play a role in political networks and choices. Most Muslim Coloureds were in the NNP section of the DA, not in the DP entity. Farouk Cassim, MP of the Inkatha Freedom Party, referred to ethnicity as the basis of politics in the Western Cape, stating that the Western Cape would be dominated by the people who have the “natural dominance” there, namely the Coloured people.<sup>1097</sup> However, abortion, homosexuality and similar issues were less important than house loans and food and fuel prices, and instead of party programs, personalities counted more.<sup>1098</sup>

The NNP emphasized the ANC’s differential policy towards blacks and Coloureds and several candidates saw it as a contest for resources between Coloureds and blacks. Zihaad Hatties, the Muslim NNP candidate for Ward 75 (New Woodlands/Colorado), said that of the New Lentegeur and Samora Machel areas, only the latter, a black area, had seen their facilities upgraded. When discussing Coloured and black people, he talked about “us” and “them”. When asked about justice for blacks Rashaad Hayns, the Muslim NNP candidate for Ward 76 (Woodlands and Lentegeur), said that the so-called Coloureds also had gutter education. He distinguished between the ANC who went and lived in luxury in exile, and the Coloureds, who did not run away. The NP had provided people affordable houses and grants, while the ANC said in Parliament that all Muslim fundamentalists were terrorists.<sup>1099</sup>

Both Hatties and Hayns referred to Islamic and foreign themes to try and gain local support. Hatties stated that all South Africans should pray for peace in Palestine. When asked whether he condemned Israel, he said that he did and that people should not forget that those who go down, go down as *shaheed* (martyrs). Similarly, Hayns, when asked why Muslims should vote for him, said that the NNP believed in freedom of religion, family values and the rights of individuals. He also accused the ANC of selling arms to Israel.<sup>1100</sup>

On 10 February 2000, Sh. Shahid Esau, deputy president of the MJC, imam Moutie Saban, head of its welfare department, and Yagyah Adams, public relations officer, announced that they would be standing as candidates for the Democratic Party. Adams claimed that there was pressure from the ANC on the MJC leadership to dismiss the DP candidates, and that as a result he was shifted from public relations officer to foreign relations officer.<sup>1101</sup>

A campaign was conducted from the Claremont mosque to cast suspicion on the DA candidates. Various Muslim clerics played some role or even openly took sides in the elections. Yusuf Waggie, a former NNP councillor and later an Independent in the 2000 local election, said that he had asked two clerics about his participation, and they said that

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<sup>1097</sup> Interview with Cassim on Radio 786, 21 November 2000.

<sup>1098</sup> Interviews on 18 February 2000 and 11 July 2000 and telephonic interview with Yagyah Adams, 9 February 2003.

<sup>1099</sup> “Straight Talk,” Radio 786, 17 November 2000.

<sup>1100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1101</sup> Interviews with Yagyah Adams, 18 February 2000 and 11 July 2000.

he should do so if it was for the community. He said that the imam of Hannover Park invited Gerald Morkel and that the NNP targeted a few imams in other areas.<sup>1102</sup> Another independent candidate, Latief Cader, said that imams had a lot of influence, could sway the vote of people and sometimes used this influence.<sup>1103</sup>

### *The Palestinian issue*

The Palestinian issue outside the borders of SA became a significant theme during the local elections. At a mass meeting on Al Aqsa at Surrey Mosque, Surrey Estate, 5 October 2000, Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels, the MJC president, condemned the DA leader for refusing to reject events in Palestine, linking anti-Israel and anti-white themes. "He is refusing because he is serving the Jews and the whites and because his future wife is part of the Israeli terrorist army."<sup>1104</sup>

On the weekend of 12 November 2000 posters appeared saying "A vote for the DA is a vote for Israel". The Israeli flag with red blood spots also appeared on the poster, with the letters DA in the same blue as the blue Star of David on the flag of Israel. The *Muslim Views* gave prominence to the poster, and its investigation concluded that, in spite of ANC officials' denials, the ANC, possibly the Thornhill branch, was responsible for the poster. The same company that printed the ANC's posters also printed this poster.<sup>1105</sup>

The three Muslim DP candidates, under pressure on this issue, tried to persuade the DA leadership to condemn Israel's conduct, but most DA leaders' initial approach was to emphasize local issues instead. Eventually, Tony Leon responded to this issue by saying that SA had more influence on a country like Zimbabwe than on Israel. He supported Palestinian self-determination as well as strong borders for Israel. According to him, moderate Muslims maintained the same view and the criticism had no effect on DA support in the Muslim and Jewish communities.<sup>1106</sup>

Yagyah Adams and Sh. Shaheed Esau experienced the Palestinian issue as damaging to the campaign, and Leon's response as too little too late. They even considered coming out with a joint statement on the issue, but in the end both won their respective wards regardless.<sup>1107</sup> However, Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels stated afterwards that the majority vote for the DA in the December 2000 elections indicated that many Muslims still felt that black people were not fit to rule the country.<sup>1108</sup>

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<sup>1102</sup> Interview at Yusuf Waggie's home, Mitchells Plain, 25 November 2000.

<sup>1103</sup> Telephone interview with Latief Cader, 21 November 2000.

<sup>1104</sup> Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels, mass meeting at Surrey Mosque, Surrey Estate, 5 October 2000, live broadcast on Voice of the Cape.

<sup>1105</sup> Gulam Savant, "ANC, DA set for tough challenge," *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 27; Hendrik Coetzee, "Kiersers kan SA in nuwe koers stuur," *Die Burger*, 28 November 2000, p. 3 and interview with Farid Sayed, 9 December 2000.

<sup>1106</sup> "Kritiek teen DA wil net aandag aflei - Leon," *Die Burger*, 6 November 2000, p. 6.

<sup>1107</sup> Telephone interviews with Yagyah Adams, 3 November 2000 and 13 November 2000.

<sup>1108</sup> Nazlia Peer, "MJC appoints Shaikh Ismail Gqamane Acting President," *Muslim Views*, January/February 2001, p. 3.

While the ANC and DA differed fundamentally on many issues, both the ANC and DA were targeted by PAGAD-linked extremists. A bomb blast occurred on 12 September 2000 outside the hall where a DA meeting was to be addressed by Gerald Morkel. Sh. Achmat Sedick was to stand for the ANC and would have been number 15 on the proportional representation list, but after threats from PAGAD against his family increased substantially, he did not stand.<sup>1109</sup>

### *The Islamist parties*

In the local elections of 2000 the MJC still found it necessary to explain that in terms of Islam Muslims had a right to vote. This was in response to the persistent message of doubt by the IUC about the legitimacy of the system or Muslim participation, but also because of continued unease among many Muslims about the impact of government policies on the public domain and their own ethnic and economic interests. The ideal situation, according to the MJC leadership, was that Muslims should voice their views from a stronger and broader political base, namely their own political party.<sup>1110</sup>

However, this time the IUC leadership revealed differences on the issue of participation. In April 2000, Ganief Hendricks, vice president of the Islamic Unity Convention, called for a new Muslim Unity Party by 2008. Hendricks stated in 2000 that while there were good reasons for not voting in 1994, he did vote for the ANC. However, he considered the fatwa of the MJC that Muslims could vote for any political party flawed. There were parties, presumably the DP and NP, which should never receive any Muslim support. However, while Ebrahim Rasool and others had promised that they could vote against anti-Islamic laws, they would have been expelled if they did and were fined for being absent during the vote. As a result, he also became convinced that there was no home for Muslims in the ANC.

Hendricks favoured the formation of a Muslim Unity Party, based on the hundreds of Muslim organizations in SA, which could form a Patriotic Front with Azapo and the PAC on issues not in direct conflict with Islamic doctrine. Such an alliance would have to fight two elections on carefully selected issues to maintain unity, but also put plans in place to persuade SA that an Islamic state is the best option.<sup>1111</sup> However, Achmad Cassiem's response was that it was impractical. According to him, Muslims were not even persuaded that their interests, and that of 40 million oppressed, would be served by uniting under one umbrella body. Cassiem would eventually become the PAC's secretary general, while Hendricks established the Al-Jama'ah party in 2007, later adjusting its name to Al-Jama.<sup>1112</sup>

As a result of Cassiem's skepticism about participation in the 2000 local elections, the AMP once again did not face any opposition from another strong Islamist party. Still

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<sup>1109</sup> Telephone interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, 16 November 2000.

<sup>1110</sup> "Political involvement of SA Muslims", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 2000, p. 1.

<sup>1111</sup> Ganief Hendricks, "Proposed 'Muslim Unity Party' to strive for an Islamic state", *Al-Qalam*, May 2000, p. 6.

<sup>1112</sup> Achmad Cassiem, "Editorial", *Al-Miftah*, June/July 2000, p. 6; <http://www.aljama.co.za>.

under the leadership of Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, the AMP again focused on Islamic values in the public sphere and concentrated its campaign on the Cape Metropolitan Council area. According to Hassiem, in contrast to the AMP approach, former IP leader Sherief Mohamed was of the opinion that Muslims should be involved first and garner more representatives, become stronger first and only then participate on a group basis.<sup>1113</sup>

The AMP only commenced its campaign three weeks before the election date. By 13 November 2000 the AMP's candidates were only registered and had not met. They were waiting for Hassiem to act, while Hassiem stated that the party did not hold monthly meetings and was based on informal contact. The AMP did not hold any public meetings and had limited media coverage. The campaign was based on putting up posters and disseminating pamphlets about two weeks before the election in Athlone, Rylands and Tableview, as well as supporters appearing in programs of the local Muslim radio stations. Some AMP candidates also relied on support from their personal networks. For example, Tasneem Kalam, coordinator of the SA Malay Cultural Association, also was the campaign manager of the AMP candidate in the Bo-Kaap, Dawood Zwavel.<sup>1114</sup>

The first and major part of the AMP's official message revolved around projecting Islam in the public domain. AMP posters promised that "a vote for the AMP will give you a reward for here and the hereafter. If you vote for the ANC/DA and they give you gay rights, you share in the sin." The AMP pamphlet *AMP: Your Natural Home in the Western Cape* mainly consisted of quotations from the Quran under different headings, such as Our Principles, Mercy and Compassion for Mankind, Respect for Human Life, absolute Justice, Racial Harmony and Religious Tolerance, selfless Service to Humanity, Women's Rights, Moral Code, Honoring Parents, Elders and the Disabled, and Educate the Nation. The pamphlet also stated that "A Vote For The Africa Moral Party Is A Vote For: Peace & Freedom/Equality/Women's Rights/Racial Harmony/Religious Values/An End to Injustice."<sup>1115</sup>

Another untitled pamphlet explained that the AMP was the merged Africa Muslim Party and Islamic Party and that it opposed prostitution, abortion, gay rights, alcohol and drug abuse, the leniency in punishment for major crimes, gambling, communism, and exploitation of the weak and underprivileged. The pamphlet stated that the AMP stood for Islamic morals and the recognition of Islamic law and capital punishment. The AMP tried to get an advertisement on Radio 786, who refused party advertisements, but the Voice of the Cape did run an AMP advertisement.<sup>1116</sup>

Muslim identity politics formed the second part of the AMP's campaign. Hassiem, for example, saw the representation and promotion of Muslims interests in the political system as his main task. Kalam said that if one is a Muslim, one ought to vote for the

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<sup>1113</sup> Interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic and *Islamic Focus*, Issue 1, November 2006, p. 2.

<sup>1114</sup> Interview with Dawood Zwavel, 13 November 2000, interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic, and personal observations in the mentioned areas.

<sup>1115</sup> *AMP: Your Natural Home in the Western Cape* (AMP pamphlet).

<sup>1116</sup> Untitled pamphlet and interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

AMP, while Zwavel said that he was also for the preservation of the history, terrain and rich culture of the Bo-Kaap. He asked why Muslims were not recognized as a separate group, like the Xhosas and Fingoes, and stated that Muslims were marginalized and that Muslims had to be represented by Muslims.<sup>1117</sup>

The AMP again tried to appeal to both working class and middle class Muslims by favouring a freemarket system, equal and compulsory education, affordable healthcare and housing for all, upliftment of the poor and a minimum 50% increase for pensioners and a drastic increase in social grants to children, and equal opportunity for all. Wasfie also saw *zakah* (alms) as a basis of socio-economic upliftment.<sup>1118</sup>

Hassiem considered widespread voter apathy as the party's most important obstacle. He saw himself as from the middle class but serving working class Muslims as well. Most middle class people were satisfied and involved in activities outside politics, and in his view most of the Indian Muslims were within this group. The poor who had to be careful with their finances were politically involved but did not provide leadership.<sup>1119</sup>

Kalam did not think the AMP candidate had a chance, since the Bo-Kaap was not a ward on its own, but dominated by the white majority of Vredehoek, Tamboerskloof and Sea Point. Both Kalam and Hassiem thought that the number of votes may be sufficient to allow proportional representation of the AMP. The Abolition of Income Tax and Usury Party, which wanted to change the economic system of the country, also became an ally of the AMP.<sup>1120</sup>

## Results

While about 70% of whites voted, only about 50% of black voters and 45% of Coloured voters participated. The latter's low participation also impeded the potential growth of the AMP. The ANC won 39.73% of the votes provincially, slightly more than in 1996. however, it failed to mobilize black voters in the Cape Metropole and won only 37.71% of the vote in the area and 79 seats. Urban blacks were the least disposed to vote in the elections.<sup>1121</sup>

The DA consolidated its Coloured and Indian support, mobilized white voters very well, and gained some black support. It won 49.88% of the provincial vote and 52.33% of the vote and 107 wards in Cape Town, in addition to the mayorship of Cape Town. In the Cape Metropole, the ACDP won 8 seats and the AMP, gaining vote in old NNP wards, won 2 seats.<sup>1122</sup>

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<sup>1117</sup> Interview with Kalam and Zwavel on "News, Reviews and Analysis" on Radio 786, 23 November 2000.

<sup>1118</sup> Interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, 13 November 2000, Durbanville Medi-Clinic.

<sup>1119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1120</sup> Kalam in telephone interview on 23 November 2000.

<sup>1121</sup> Klandermans et al., op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>1122</sup> Tom Lodge, "The South African local government elections of December 2000", *Politikon*, vol. 28 no. 1 (2001), pp. 21-46 on pp. 41-45. Lodge states that the AMP won 3 seats, but it only won two seats.

The main concerns and issues in the local elections were again national issues, except that the Palestinian issue also formed a part of the election campaign. In spite of some shifts toward the DA there was no end to the deep political divisions within the Coloured and Indian populations, and between Muslims. Most Muslims voted for candidates of the bigger parties. In politics, as in other ways, Muslims in the Western Cape often had more in common with non-Muslims than Muslims elsewhere in the country.<sup>1123</sup>

However, in spite of its limited electioneering, the AMP received 14 540 votes in the local elections. The party increased its proportional vote and won two seats on the city council. According to Lodge, the internal political divisions between supporters of the ANC and supporters of the opposition parties, plus the political withdrawal indicated by low registration among Indians and Coloureds, were the most likely reasons why political Islam did not match the success of political Christianity.<sup>1124</sup>

However, there was a considerable bloc of floating voters among Muslim Coloureds potentially available to the AMP. If one compares the results of the local election with those of previous elections, there was a more or less stable trend of at least 8% or more support for an Islamist party. In addition, a sizeable number of Muslim representatives existed in local government, opposition parties, the national ruling party, the executive and the bureaucracy.

## **Conclusion**

The new order encompassed diverse networks of power and values. In the 1990s before 1994, sectors of the predominantly Coloured and Indian Muslim community, even those aligned to the NP, were essentially spectators in the process of transition from predominantly white NP rule to predominantly black ANC rule. However, individual Muslims aligned to the ANC and PAC played a more significant role than ever before in the formation of the political order in South Africa.

Whereas Muslims tended to be on the margins of the political structures developed under Dutch, English and Afrikaner rule, individual Muslims would also play an important role in the development of the new ANC-ruled state as a complex nexus of formations during 1994-2000. However, the authority of the new government and state did not remove the political impact of group identities and group politics on patterns of political competition and cooperation.

In the Western Cape particular territorial and regional dynamics reinforced group divisions and group politics. Many Coloureds perceived the Western Cape as the area from where they originated and to which they had a privileged claim. Coloured politics as the politics of a minority was historically often characterised by a dominant trend to align

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<sup>1123</sup> Goolam Vahed and Shamil Jeppie, "Multiple Communities: Muslims in Post-Apartheid South Africa" in Johan Daniel and Roger Burrows (eds.), *State of the Nation 2, 2004-2005* (Pretoria: HSRC, 2004), pp. 252-86 on p. 280.

<sup>1124</sup> Tom Lodge, *Consolidating Democracy: South Africa's Second Popular Election* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1999), pp. 191, 192, 194.

with white identities and predominantly white-led political projects, a smaller trend to align with predominantly black political projects, and a third trend for a distinctive identity and political assertion.

After the fall of the white-ruled system - one of the foundations on which the dominant Coloured identities and their intermediate socio-political positions rested - Coloured identities were recast and group politics reconstituted. A wide spectrum of positions on Coloured identity emerged, including identification with a past as slaves, an exclusive Coloured identity, an African identity, non-racialism and a South African rainbow nationalism, an anti-Muslim Khoisan revivalism and a resurgence of Christian identification among some Coloureds.

None achieved a completely hegemonic position, but the fluid context and contestation enabled and probably fuelled a new exploration of Muslim identities and Islamic frameworks in politics among Coloured Muslims. This state of affairs included extraparliamentary mobilization and electoral politics within various Islamist and non-Islamist parties. However, considerable alienation, distrust and apathy affected parts of the Coloured population, but also significant sections among Indians, the other major group among Muslims.

The dominance of the executive meant that in the new system, electoral politics could only have a limited relevance to a small minority like the Muslims. Muslims therefore pursued other means to promote Islam and Muslim interests and ideals in this context. One means was a presence in sectors of the executive and its bureaucratic and informal networks. Prominent Muslims in the bureaucracy or national and local government were also able to achieve some gains in particular cases.

However, Muslim leaders in the ANC did not make a strong stand to represent the opposition among most Muslims to the secular legal provisions which allowed abortion, prostitution, pornography, alcohol or gambling. Overall, they were also unable to significantly promote Muslim concerns about violent crime, affirmative action and various socio-economic and developmental concerns.

A second means to influence politics was a Muslim group lobby, but because of internal divisions, no representative or strong lobby emerged during the period 1994-2000. This deficiency in mobilization and organisation, combined with few bargaining chips, meant that the ANC or the NP or DA provincial governments were seldom effectively pressured or forced to prioritize Muslim communal concerns.

A third means to influence politics used by Muslims was extra-parliamentary community mobilization in the form of PAGAD. In some ways, the mobilization complemented Muslim electoral politics because of greater consciousness about the challenges of violent crime, gangs and drugs to families and communities. However, as the Qibla-aligned faction in PAGAD increased its hold, intimidation and violence against NP- and ANC-aligned Muslim politicians also increased. Urban terrorism by a small group of Muslims

was a fourth means to pursue political goals, but had no lasting effect on the legitimacy of Muslim claims or support among Muslims for the moderate Islamist parties.

Among Muslims, a questioning of the system's legitimacy and a debate about whether to participate in elections would emerge in the run-up to the 1994 and 1999 national and the 1996 and 2000 local elections. An element of alienation and apathy would continue to mark sectors of Coloured and Indian Muslim electoral politics after 1994.

Both the MJC and the IUC favoured a fifth means, namely one political platform for all Muslims, but this did not materialize. However, the Islamist parties that emerged, although seriously deficient in terms of organization, provided an alternative and sustained basis for mobilization, in addition to the predominantly black-led and white-led parties.

While Islamic, Islamist and Muslim communal discourses played a role, Muslims still mostly conducted politics using their networks, assets and shared identities within broader Coloured and Indian politics. The geographical concentration, social cohesion, historical networks and capital and skills base among Muslims contributed to their good representation among independent candidates, candidates of the ANC and NP, and the provincial ANC leadership.

The role of the Muslim elite and main institutions of political choices was very limited. The MJC and IUC leadership, both Muslim community radio stations and the Muslim elite, all institutions and networks that had a strong influence on the interpretation of Islam, were clearly against the opposition parties. However, many Coloured Muslims ignored their message on this issue and did not seem to significantly differ from other Coloureds in terms of high political distrust, apathy and withdrawal, a strong minority bloc of support for the ANC, and majority support for opposition parties.

Eventually, as in the decades before 1994, most Coloured and Indian Muslims were divided between support for either a white-led or black-led political structure. While most supported the former, a strong minority supported the latter. Another small but resilient minority chose a distinctive Islamist party, while others abstained in apathy or protest.

However after 1994, religious collective identification strengthened among Coloureds and Indians. The secular emphasis of the ANC, NP and DA party programs remained dominant, and also appealed to many secularized Muslims. However, even within these parties, many candidates took care to frame their messages in terms of Christianity or Islam or other religious identities.

In addition, some religious networks and institutions were used to mobilize people to support these parties. Voters sometimes saw the policies of the parties they opposed as a threat to their Islamic framework of interpretation and Muslim identity. Predominantly secular parties also served as vehicles to pursue the interests and ideals of some members of religious and communal identity groups. However, for Muslims this approach regularly entailed pragmatic choices, compromises and partial achievements.



Demographics and recast racial identities, the executive-dominated system, the existing power constellation between various parties, regional dynamics, political marginalisation and alienation, socio-economic factors and party leadership influenced political life in the Western Cape. This was especially the case among Muslims in the Western Cape during the period 1994-2000. However, religious identities and communal mobilization also had a significant impact on politics among Muslims.

## Chapter 7: Transnational dimensions and local politics

### Islamic historical and cultural heritage

Many Muslim groups across the religious and political spectrum in the Western Cape emphasized the diverse and rich historical and cultural heritage of the Islamic world.<sup>1125</sup> The use of Arabic script and terminology, Islamic decorative patterns, classical literature, the celebration of community during the Hajj and consciousness and attention as far as the broader Islamic world was concerned all contributed to a sense of a common heritage.<sup>1126</sup>

Both the IUC and the MJC tended to view the Middle East as the symbolic center of the broader Islamic world. However, there was an undercurrent of thinking opposed to the dominance of Arabic Islam while postulating a truer Islam present in the Southeast Asian context.

Muslim media, clerics and leaders noticed the difference between the high notes of Islamic history and the current position of Muslims in the world. IUC leader imam Achmad Cassiem, *Muslim Views*, the MJC paper *Ad-Da'wah* and ANC regional leader Ebrahim Rasool all exhorted Muslims to reflect on what kind of relevance they currently had.<sup>1127</sup>

The decline of the Islamic world was attributed by some to the isolation and the imposed limits on innovation and critical enquiry after the Mongol takeover of much of the Islamic world, while many also adhered to a view that this was the result of deviation from the provisions of the Divine Order.<sup>1128</sup> However, whatever the identified cause, the consciousness of a common and often glorious Islamic past served to reinforce the group pride and identity of many Muslims.

The claim that Islam was historically definitive among revealed religions also created an opportunity to assert and maintain distinctiveness and even a sense of superiority.<sup>1129</sup> Esack referred to an indomitable belief in the superiority of Islam among many Muslims, irrespective of their community's numerical status.<sup>1130</sup>

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<sup>1125</sup> "Early Islam and science", *Muslim Views*, August 1998, p. 22; "Muslim scientists (before European Renaissance) Ali Ibn Rabban al-Tabbari", *Al-Miftah*, November/December 1999, p. 15; "Literature and civilisation", *Al-Miftah*, Augustus/September 1999, p. 7; "Alhambra – The Red Castle", *Muslim Views*, October 1997, p. 15; "The fabulous Blue Mosque of Istanbul", *Muslim Views*, August 1998, p. 28; personal attendance at MJC function on "Islamic civilization in Africa", Schaapkraal, 4 November 2000.

<sup>1126</sup> Robinson, op. cit., p. 183 and Azmeh, op. cit.

<sup>1127</sup> "Rasool calls on Muslims not to belie Islamic code", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 8; "Trailing the legacy of the Imam", *Muslim Views*, September 1999, p. 15; "The destiny of Muslims", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1998, p. 6; "Why do Muslims lag behind in scientific achievements", *Ad-Da'wah*, January 1999, p. 4.

<sup>1128</sup> "The decline of science in the Islamic World", *Muslim Views*, September 1998, p. 22; "Just for the record", *Muslim Views*, May 1998, p. 32.

<sup>1129</sup> Robinson refers in this regard to a sura from the Quran that "might belongs to Allah and his messenger, and the believers." Robinson, op. cit., pp. 8, 184.

<sup>1130</sup> Esack, *Being*, op. cit., p. 171 and Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 43.

## The anti-Islamic international order

Muslim political groups and media observed and assessed international politics in terms of Islamic and Muslim identity frameworks. *Muslim Views*, in the context of the Chechen struggle against Russia, stated for example: “The sharing of our global Islamic resources is not up for debate: we love for our brethren what we love for ourselves. Muslims know of and recognise only one type of ‘boundary’; that between *kufr* (unbelief) and Islam.”<sup>1131</sup>

In this regard, there were three themes in the interpretations of the groups as diverse as the MJC, clerics not aligned with the MJC, the IUC, PAGAD, Muslim Assembly and Boorhaanol Islam. Sometimes these themes converged or existed in succession; sometimes one theme was clearly dominant.

The first and most common theme was one of an entrenched rivalry between the West, portrayed as a monolith in this regard, and the Islamic world. Islam was seen as a resurgent force in the world, especially after the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 and the fall of communism in 1990. However, this resurgent Islamic world was opposed by the “West”. Some adherents of this thinking not only postulated such a rivalry as politically or historically contingent, but saw it in terms of an inevitable or apocalyptic “clash of civilizations”.

In terms of this approach, the Western governments, especially the US, Western media and intelligence services were seen as actively trying to weaken the Muslim world. Zionist lobbies in the West and in Israel were viewed as especially negative to Islam and Muslim interests.<sup>1132</sup> Muslims were perceived as being under siege world-wide, and this was also the case in SA. Mansur Modak, influential host of current affairs programs on Radio 786, formulated it as follows: “You are innocent until proven Muslim”.<sup>1133</sup>

These forces were accused of demonizing Islamists to secure their geopolitical, energy and arms trade interests, and were often described as imperialist, colonialist and/or aggressive in nature.<sup>1134</sup> Abdullah Hakim Quick, the director of the MJC Da’wah

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<sup>1131</sup> “The Burning Season” (editorial), *Muslim Views*, January 2000, p. 32.

<sup>1132</sup> “Blind Justice”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 1 (2000), pp. 2-3; “Confronting the New World Order”, *Ad-Da’wah*, December 1999, p. 9; “International Anti-Terrorism Convention”, *Ad-Da’wah*, January 2000, p. 4; “Freedom & democracy: But not for Islamists”, *Muslim Views*, June 1997, p. 9; “Western journalism as Zionist tool”, *Muslim Views*, June 1997, p. 11; Edward Said, “Zionisation of the media”, *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 29; keynote address by Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim, national chief coordinator, PAGAD national conference, University of Durban-Westville, Durban, 8 August 1998; “Kosovo crisis”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 3 (June 1999), p. 3; Sh. Sadullah Khan, “Muslim ‘Fundamentalist’”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 35 no. 3 (June 2000), pp. 5-8 on p. 8; “Blind Justice”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 31 No. 1 (March 1996), pp. 2-3.

<sup>1133</sup> “Straight Talk”, Radio 786, 12 January 2000.

<sup>1134</sup> See for example “Clinton first US president boasting doctrine on Islam” and “Clinton played double game in Bosnia”, *Muslim Views*, December 1995, p. 8 and p. 11, “How the Media Manipulates Truth about Terrorism”, *Muslim Views*, April 1997, p. 18; “Iran-US relations: New US policy unjustified”, *Muslim Views*, January 1996, p. 6; “Perception, not reality, dictates American view of Arabs”, *Muslim Views*, November 1997, p. 27; “Ramadaan – Month of mobilisation of the Ummah”, *Muslim Views*, December 1997, p. 19; “MI5 targets Islam”, *Muslim Views*, January 1996, p. 6; “Blair fails on Islamophobia”, *Muslim*

Foundation, indicated that Islamophobia equating Islam with terrorism was very prevalent in Hollywood, which deliberately fostered a fear of Islamic symbols and distrust of the integrity and intentions of Muslims.<sup>1135</sup>

A second approach combined this rivalry between the Islamic world and the West with a second theme containing elements of Pan-Africanism or Black Consciousness. Attention was given to non-Muslim figures like Steve Biko and Muslim martyrs like imam Abdullah Haron, with possible linkages to the discourses of the PAC and Azapo. This trend was especially visible in Qibla, the IUC and Radio 786, and when Shaikh Sadullah Khan was the editor of *Muslim Views*.

Imam Achmat Cassiem's designation of the ideal SA as Azania also fitted into this category. At the first regional IUC meeting in Athlone, Waheeda Cassiem appealed to the youth of Azania, and at the launch of Radio 786, the program included a commemoration session of "martyrs who lost their lives during the anti-apartheid liberation struggle of Azania".<sup>1136</sup>

The "clash of civilizations" approach was reinforced or even superseded by an emphasis, not only on the dominance of the US in international politics, but also on the supremacy of capitalist ideology, globalisation, and the influence of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and World Trade Organizations (WTO) as major underpinnings of an essentially anti-Islamic international order.<sup>1137</sup> This current, adhered to by Farid Sayed during his editorship of the *Muslim Views*, easily linked up with various non-Muslim groups and discourses opposing globalisation or neo-liberalism. In the SA context, such groups included sections of the ANC and various workerist groups.

Sayed saw the WTO, World Bank and IMF as the prime actors in predominantly Western globalisation, being responsible for some cases of extreme debt, the reinforcing of existing economic and political inequality, while representing a creeping globalisation of values threatening families. These institutions also had an impact in SA, with World Bank loans mainly used to develop white areas and to escape the effect of international isolation, leaving huge debts for the new SA, where advisors from these groups were in key ministries.<sup>1138</sup> Free trade and privatization promoted by the WTO was also seen as

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*Views*, May 2000, p. 9; "Amnesty cites US human rights violations", *Muslim Views*, May 2000, p. 4; "Eid Message", *Al-Miftah*, January/February 1999, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>1135</sup> A.H. Quick, "It is wrong to equate Islam with terrorism" at <http://www.mjc.org.za>.

<sup>1136</sup> "First regional IUC meeting", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 12; "Radio 786 launch", *Muslim Views*, October 1995, p. 8; "Imam Abdullah Haron", *Muslim Views*, September 1999, p. 1; "IUC's tribute", *Muslim Views*, September 1999, p. 4 and "Imam Haron & Sheikh Yusuf of Macassar Commemoration", *Al-Miftah*, November/December 1999, p. 5; "Doing justice to the legacy of a great martyr", *Muslim Views*, September 1999, p. 32. See also Abdulkader Tayob, "Jihad against Drugs in Cape Town: A Discourse-Centred Analysis", *Social Dynamics*, vol. 22 no. 2 (1996), pp. 23-29 on p. 25.

<sup>1137</sup> "US hegemony the aim of the New World Order", *Muslim Views*, August 1998, p. 14; "Free trade and the World Trade Organisation (WTO)", *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 22. See also keynote address by Abdus-Salaam Ebrahim, national chief coordinator, PAGAD national conference, University of Durban-Westville, Durban, 8 August 1998.

<sup>1138</sup> "Terrible triplets of global instability", *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 11; "Freedom in a third world", *Muslim Views*, May 2000, p. 24.

the main reason for job losses in the clothing and textile sector of the Western Cape,<sup>1139</sup> as the US was seeking a market for its products in Africa.<sup>1140</sup> However, Sayed described them as strong forces, but not part of one big conspiracy.

Opposition to this order did not exclude the pursuit of additional objectives or pragmatism. For example, while Rashied Omar regretted that “the pervasive influence of wealth on human behaviour continues to bedevil our contemporary struggle for equity and redress in South Africa”, he emphasized that Muslims had to ensure that quality and standards were not sacrificed in the process.<sup>1141</sup> Dullah Omar, an ANC minister and Western Cape leader of the party, stated in 1994: “We cannot ignore that we are operating within a world capitalist system, which is dominant at the moment. I’m not saying that we must simply accept those things. It is a reality we must face. Hopefully one day the balance of forces will be such that we can reverse this process.”<sup>1142</sup>

In addition, even those who were in general opposed to these forces, like *Muslim Views*, *Boorhanool Islam* and Yusuf da Costa, rector of the Islamic College of SA and the SA head of the Naqshbandi order, acknowledged that for Muslims, globalisation also had some positive effects. Greater opportunities for travel meant less isolation and more links to the global ummah - the liberatory potential of the *hajj* pilgrimage and acquiring more knowledge of Islam or Sufism were also advantages.<sup>1143</sup>

Similarly, Esack thought the instability of identity and multiple identities, the decoupling of culture from territory, consumerism, the issue of limits in a plural environment and a deeply personal erosion of faith all presented significant issues for Muslims, but were not the outcome of one big conspiracy. While he was critical of the Pax Americana’s values and globalisation, he emphasized that one could not speak of the Jews or the Americans, but had to appreciate the nuances and everchanging diversity. According to Esack, Muslims could not say that the Jews were their enemy, but had to judge actions in a particular political context.<sup>1144</sup>

In Esack’s view, a tiny minority among Muslims intensified the sense of being under siege and vastly exaggerated the sense of insecurity. They also benefited from the tendency among Muslims, because Islam was so central to their identity, to think that whenever something went wrong, it was because they were Muslim.<sup>1145</sup>

### Conspiracy theories

*Muslim Views* during the mid-1990s, edited at the time by Shaykh Sadullah Khan, periodically combined international conspiracy theories with a conspiratorial view of

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<sup>1139</sup> “Free trade and the World Trade Organisation (WTO)”, *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 22 and “The way of the Prophet (SAW)”, *Muslim Views*, June 2000, p. 32.

<sup>1140</sup> “Looking back on Clinton’s visit”, *Muslim Views*, March 1998, p. 56.

<sup>1141</sup> “Significance of Muharram”, *Muslim Views*, May 1997, p. 13.

<sup>1142</sup> “Dullah Omar – Our minister of Justice”, *Muslim Views*, May 1994, pp. 2, 3 and 22 on p. 3.

<sup>1143</sup> Interview with Dr. Yusuf da Costa, Masjidul Quds mosque, 1 March 2000.

<sup>1144</sup> Lectures by Faried Esack, Parliament of World Religions, 3-4 December 2000.

<sup>1145</sup> Ibid.

politics in SA. Commenting on the struggle between the southern and northern regions of Yemen in 1995, *Muslim Views* commented: “Muslim countries are again at war with each other. This puts most of the world’s crisis areas firmly in Muslim hands. Afghanistan, Kashmir, Bosnia, Somalia have all borne the brunt of proxy wars for the divisive forces of the “first” world.”<sup>1146</sup>

A long article with excerpts from a book alleging a conspiracy by a Committee of 300 pursuing One World Government was published by *Muslim Views* when Rahman was senior reporter and Sh. Sa’dullah Khan the editor.<sup>1147</sup> Rahman defined the Committee as the invisible power dictating global trends.<sup>1148</sup> He also saw the UN as an arm of tyranny under the cover of human rights, guilty of gross inhumanity against Muslims.<sup>1149</sup> America was used and under the control of the Zionist conspiracy. “All over the world – Kashmir, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Chechnya, Algeria, Palestine – everywhere Muslims are being butchered. Why? Because Islam stands in the way of this global conspiracy.”<sup>1150</sup>

“The west also knows that only Islam offers an alternative to its morally-bankrupt civilization. Even economically, the west is in a tailspin. Throughout history, it has plundered the resources of other peoples, whether in Asia or Africa, to develop its industries and economies. This is now being challenged from various quarters. It is in the treatment of Muslims within their societies that the west’s true nature stands exposed.”<sup>1151</sup>

The global conspiracy also had a local dimension, according to Rahman. In SA, Harry Oppenheimer, ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in the Committee of 300. He had made an offer to the ANC’s main constitutional negotiator Cyril Ramaphosa of 40% shareholding in the Jonnic conglomerate. However, Rahman stated, the Zionist conspiracy had already infiltrated major ANC government structures with white liberals sitting in key positions. This explained the reason for the inclusion of clauses on pornography, gay rights, gambling and abortion.

Rahman emphasized that the ANC-government was heavily influenced by the Zionists.<sup>1152</sup> In 1997, *Muslim Views* asked rhetorically “when will the domination of our Media and our economy be wrestled from the greedy and manipulating clutches of the

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<sup>1146</sup> “Another Muslim Conflict Area”, *Muslim Views*, May 1994, p. 24.

<sup>1147</sup> “Excerpts – ‘Conspirators Hierarchy – The story of the Committee of 300’, by Dr John Coleman”, *Muslim Views*, March 1997, p. 11.

<sup>1148</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “SA’s Gold and Diamonds in Foreign Hands”, *Muslim Views*, July 1997, p. 25.

<sup>1149</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “United Nations Organisation – World conspiracy exposed”, *Muslim Views*, April 1996, p. 22 and Fu’ad Rahman, “Human Rights Day, 21 March – a Critique”, *Muslim Views*, March/April 1997, p. 10.

<sup>1150</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “Who controls the American presidents?”, *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 10; Fu’ad Rahman, “Gore’s visit, Zionist plot to stop deals with Syria, Iran” and “PAGAD vs Global Conspiracy”, *Muslim Views*, March 1997, pp. 2 and 12 respectively; Fu’ad Rahman, “The Zionist role in the media and their shaping of public perceptions – and how reporters perceive the news”, *Muslim Views*, October 1997, p. 12.

<sup>1151</sup> “Freedom & democracy: But not for Islamists”, *Muslim Views*, June 1997, p. 9.

<sup>1152</sup> “PAGAD vs Global Conspiracy”, *Muslim Views*, March 1997, p. 12.

Zionist “Masters” and returned to caring people in order to serve the interest of our country?”<sup>1153</sup>

Five years later, Rahman was the editor of a new newspaper *Muslim Gazette*, which he distributed at the IUC annual general meeting in 2000. He called the anti-terrorism bill part of a world-wide anti-Muslim project and claimed that the Democratic Alliance was a front for Zionists. The conspirators, in his view, had switched their allegiance from the English colonial authorities to the Afrikaners when the latter came to power. They controlled the economy while allowing the Afrikaners to rule, training the Broederbond and forming alliances with Afrikaner capitalists, also during the sanctions years. They had infiltrated the anti-apartheid movement and their aim was to increase the power of the DP and NP, while allowing the ANC to break up into capitalist, Marxist and centrists factions.<sup>1154</sup>

Several clerics had similar views on politics in SA. Moulana Abdurahman Segers and Shaykh Riyadh Walls stated that the Zionists had persuaded the Afrikaners to manage the country while they make profits.<sup>1155</sup> Maulana Ebrahim Khan, president of the Sunni Ulama Council, thought that Zionism exploited the ethnic and sectarian differences among Muslims in SA.<sup>1156</sup> One of the most prominent clerics, the president of the MJC, Sh. Ebrahim Daniels, stated in 2000 at a public rally on Palestine that the United Nations, the US and most other countries were controlled by the Zionists, the World Bank, the IMF and the Freemasons.<sup>1157</sup>

In 2000, the MJC’s Da’wah Department placed an article on its website that alleged the Freemasons had established the USA as the first Masonic state and that Freemasons planned one global government to restore Western supremacy. Freemasonry also showed many similarities in symbolism and characteristics with the Dajjal, the prophet of a false religion, and was its forerunner, establishing a global system that oppressed the true enemies of the imposter prophet, as well as Islam and Muslims.<sup>1158</sup>

While the progressives and individual thinkers like Sayed in *Muslim Views* and Vallie of the Muslim Assembly did not adhere to closed conspiratorial frameworks, conspiracy theories played a strong role in the discourses of senior figures in the MJC, IUC and PAGAD. In addition, anti-Zionism constituted a common base among many Muslim adherents and non-adherents of conspiracy frameworks.

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<sup>1153</sup> “From ’96 into ’97”, *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 36.

<sup>1154</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “Democratic Alliance - the inside story”, *Muslim Gazette*, October 2000, p. 5.

<sup>1155</sup> Interview with Segers on 22 November 2000 and Walls on 30 November 2000.

<sup>1156</sup> Interview with Segers on 22 November 2000 and interview with Khan on 22 November 2000.

<sup>1157</sup> Speech by Sh. Gabriels broadcast on Voice of the Cape, 5 November 2000. He maintained a similar view in an interview with the *Sunday Times* newspaper in November 2001. Steven Roth Institute for the Study of Racism and Antisemitism, Global Report 2001 at <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2001-2/sthfrica.htm>.

<sup>1158</sup> “Shadows – the new world order” at <http://www.mjc.org.za/Dawah%20Dept/Free%20Masons.htm>.

## The preference for Islamist movements

The main Muslim groups and media gave significant coverage to the struggles, sacrifices and suffering of Muslims in various parts of the world. All major conflicts in the Muslim world were covered, even those in China.<sup>1159</sup> Kashmir, which was the object of struggle between India and Pakistan, sometimes was a divisive issue between Indian Muslims, but in the Muslim media mostly Indian policy was criticized.<sup>1160</sup> The Muslim struggles that received most attention were those between Palestinians and Israel, Bosnia, Algeria, Iraq, Iran and Chechnya. Attention was also given to the position of Muslims in Europe and the US, especially regarding perceived harassment and discrimination.<sup>1161</sup>

All these struggles were covered in newspapers like *Muslim Views*, *Al-Qalam* and *Al-Miftah*. They were also extensively covered in the “Global Perspectives” programs of Radio 786 and on “Voice of the Cape”. The introduction of Muslim radio stations in 1995 probably served to significantly strengthen not only the consciousness and knowledge of international affairs in the community, which had pockets of limited literacy and illiteracy, but also the interpretation of events through particularist Muslim prisms.<sup>1162</sup>

The exposure to Muslims and Muslim struggles elsewhere did not only have a cognitive dimension, but also had a significant emotional effect on Muslims. Various media stated that silence and passivity while fellow-Muslims were being oppressed and killed would be tantamount to consent, and that Muslims had an Islamic duty to support their fellow-Muslims in need. The tone and intensity of responses reflected to what degree local Muslims linked their identity to others in the Muslim and Islamic world, even though most Muslims in the Cape had never been to these countries and Muslims there did not necessarily know about the presence of Muslims in SA supporting their struggle.<sup>1163</sup>

These discourses contained a common theme of Islam and Muslims constituting a resurgent global force but also being under siege by hostile actors. Muslims represented a superior civilization but were being oppressed by Western and Zionist actors and their Muslim lackeys. *Boorhanol Islam* saw Robert Mugabe’s speech on the threat of Islamic “fundamentalists” in Africa as part of a broader effort “to demonise the legitimate aspirations of Muslims all over”, and that this attitude was also being used by the new SA government.<sup>1164</sup> According to the MJC publication, *Ad-Da’wah*, the example of the

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<sup>1159</sup> “Human Rights and Muslims in China”, *Muslim Views*, April 1997, p. 11; “Why the silence on Sinkiang”, *Muslim Views*, March 1998, p. 21; “China charges exiled Muslim activist’s wife”, *Muslim Views*, September 1999, p. 10; “Persecution of Chinese Muslims ignored by media and the West”, *Muslim Views*, May 2000, p. 8.

<sup>1160</sup> “Kashmir Fate still in Balance”, *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 14; “Kashmir Muslims butchered”, *Muslim Views*, May 1995, p. 12; “Occupied Kashmir”, *Muslim Views*, September 1995, p. 9 and “Gross human rights violation in Kashmir”, *Muslim Views*, March 1997, p. 13.

<sup>1161</sup> “Anti-Muslim abuse at dangerous high in UK”, *Muslim Views*, March 2000, p. 11; “Farrakhan joins America’s Muslims to serve Islam”, *Muslim Views*, March 2000, p. 3; “Muslims in America remain under pressure, despite court victory over ‘secret evidence’”, *Al-Miftah*, February 2000, p. 15.

<sup>1162</sup> “Radio 786 Global Perspectives”, *IUC Views*, January/February 1997, p. 10.

<sup>1163</sup> “Islam under Attack”, *IUC News*, March 1995, p. 3; “The Burning Season” (editorial), *Muslim Views*, January 2000, p. 32; interview with Yagyah Adams, Athlone, 26 February 2000.

<sup>1164</sup> “Mugabe’s speech against Islam challenged”, *Muslim Views*, February 1995, p. 8.



Islamist movements also served to provide inspiration for struggles against perceived local oppression.<sup>1165</sup> In addition, it constituted a unifying theme in the discourses of the politically, ethnically and economically-divided Muslim community.

Most Muslim groups and media in the Western Cape criticized the incumbent governments in Arab Muslim countries in the Middle East as autocracies. These governments were often seen as instruments of Western hegemony and intervention that did not pursue Muslim interests. *Muslim Views*, for example, described the Organisation of Islamic Conference as bringing together “the despots, heads of a military junta, dictators and pseudo-democrats who conduct affairs of state as if these countries are their personal fiefdoms.”<sup>1166</sup> *Boorhaanol Islam* referred to a motley group of Muslim monarchies, oligarchies and military dictatorships only focused on self-interest.<sup>1167</sup>

In general, most Muslim groups and media favoured Islamist opposition movements in Arab countries. In the case of North Africa, support was given to the Islamist groups in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco.<sup>1168</sup> While Khan was editor of the *Muslim Views*, its “Prisoner of Faith” column included Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) leader Sh. Abbas Madani<sup>1169</sup>, the Tunisian Al-Nahdah movement scholar Sh. Mabrouk Ez-Zran<sup>1170</sup> and the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood scholar Sh. Abdel-Hamid Kishk<sup>1171</sup>.

Under Sayed, *Muslim Views* and *Ad-Da’wah* criticized the SA government for selling arms to the Algerian government in its fight against the Islamists, and also supported Islamist movements in Tunisia and Morocco.<sup>1172</sup> Both progressive thinkers and the IUC tried to strengthen contacts with Tunisian Al-Nahdah leader Rashid Ghannouchi. Similarly, *Boorhaanol Islam*, *Al-Miftah*, *Muslim Views* and the two radio stations supported the Islamists in Turkey and Egypt.<sup>1173</sup> MJC president Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels

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<sup>1165</sup> “Muslims in South Africa”, *Ad-Da’wah*, No. 18 (June 1998), pp. 6-7 on p. 7.

<sup>1166</sup> “OIC: Hope for the future or a sham”, *Muslim Views*, December 1997, p. 32.

<sup>1167</sup> “Bosnia”, *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 30 no. 3 (1995), pp. 2-3.

<sup>1168</sup> In 1992 a general election in Algeria won by the Islamist group, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), was annulled by the military, which dissolved the FIS. A bloody civil war in which more than 150,000 people lost their lives resulted. William B. Quandt, *Between Ballots and Bullets: Algeria's Transition from Authoritarianism* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1998) and International Crisis Group, *Islamism, Violence and Reform: Turning the Page*, Middle East Reports No. 29, July 2004.

<sup>1169</sup> *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 4.

<sup>1170</sup> *Muslim Views*, July 1997, p. 4.

<sup>1171</sup> *Muslim Views*, February 1997, p. 4.

<sup>1172</sup> “Algeria – the Bloody road to Freedom”, *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 8 and “Free the FIS leaders in Algerian prisons”, *Muslim Views*, March 1997, p. 4; “Graves a mute testimony to massacre” and “Security forces behind killings”, *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 12; “Liberty calls for release of political prisoners in Morocco” and “Women held in Tunisian prisons” in *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 17; “Looking back on Clinton’s visit”, *Muslim Views*, March 1998, p. 56; “Algeria – the Nightmare is the Reality”, *Al-Miftah*, March/April 2000, p. 11; “Algeria: The insensitivity of SA government”, *Ad-Da’wah*, July 1998, p. 9.

<sup>1173</sup>; “Turkey’s Islamic party banned”, *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 13; “Virtue Party reclaims status”, *Muslim Views*, April 1998, p. 7; “Turkish Muslims defend right of hijab”, *Muslim Views*, May 2000, p. 12; “Turkey”, *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1999, p. 2.

described pres. Hosni Mubarak as a repressive ruler and *Muslim Views* and the IUC also clearly favoured the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>1174</sup>

However, most Muslim groups and media also distinguished between the governments of predominantly Arab countries and their populations. This was especially clear in the case of Iraq. In 1990 the United Nations Security Council, at the behest of the USA, imposed economic sanctions on Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power. The sanctions included a full trade embargo and eventually contributed to the deaths of more than 400,000 Iraqi children.

Under Khan, but also under Sayed, *Muslim Views* viewed Hussein as a secular autocrat. However, the sanctions against Iraq were denounced and US arrogance blamed for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis.<sup>1175</sup> Sh. Sa'dullah Khan considered the US' readiness to bomb Iraq as an effort "to ensure the domination of US power and profits." The USA first supported Saddam's dictatorship but turned against it when he wanted a bigger part of oil production than they wanted to give him.<sup>1176</sup> Under Sayed, *Muslim Views* gave prominence to an article on the price of sanctions on Iraq's children and *Al-Miftah* did the same.<sup>1177</sup> The MJC condemned the US bombing attack on Baghdad, Iraq in 1999 as international terrorism.<sup>1178</sup>

### Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is important since its monarchical government is the guardian of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and it is the site of the annual *hajj* pilgrimage. There was some difference between the MJC and other actors like the IUC and *Muslim Views* as far as the government of Saudi Arabia was concerned. The MJC did not openly criticize the Saudi government, which funded the MJC and also was respected as the guardian of the holy cities.

In contrast, Sayed criticized both the Saudi government and African governments for squandering money and being corrupt, saying that this was not only the result of global powers but also local despots and imperial powers.<sup>1179</sup> He also gave publicity to articles on Saudi political repression.<sup>1180</sup>

Similarly, the IUC newspaper *Al-Miftah* also described the political regime in Saudi Arabia as corrupt.<sup>1181</sup> *Al-Miftah* celebrated the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi

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<sup>1174</sup> "MJC envisages new challenges", *Muslim Views*, July 1999, p. 3. *Muslim Views* also had a critical view of Mubarak and its reporting favoured the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood, as in "Basic Human Rights Violated" and "Ikhwan al-Muslimin still on trial", *Muslim Views*, November 1995, p. 7.

<sup>1175</sup> "Iraq – Just another pawn" and "Sanctioning the death of the innocents", *Muslim Views*, November 1997, pp. 7 and 60; "Sanctions – the silent killer", *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 5; "Save the children of Iraq", *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1997, p. 4.

<sup>1176</sup> "Impending attack on Iraq", *Muslim Views*, February 1998, p. 7.

<sup>1177</sup> "TV documentary exposes devastating toll of sanctions against Iraq", *Muslim Views*, April 2000, p. 26.

<sup>1178</sup> "International terrorism", *Ad-Da'wah*, January 1999, p. 2.

<sup>1179</sup> "Freedom in the Third World", *Muslim Views*, May 2000, p. 24.

<sup>1180</sup> "Saudis stand accused of human rights violations", *Muslim Views*, April 2000, p. 27.

<sup>1181</sup> "United States of Terror", *Al-Miftah*, September/October 1998, p. 2.

Arabia with a front page photograph of thousands of Muslims assembling around the Kabaa but with an inscription “Hajj – Instrument for liberation paralysed by Saudi’s domination”, and a report on the Saudi opposition attacking the royal house’s greed, ineptitude, corruption, sleaze and nepotism.<sup>1182</sup>

Before 1994, during the Iran-Iraq war Arab states used money to support Iraq. As a result, the MJC received less support from Saudi Arabia and had to cut its budget.<sup>1183</sup> The MJC acknowledged that Saudi Arabia did donate a large amount of money to Muslims, but also that it was controlled and allocated by the Saudi Embassy in Pretoria. The Saudi Islamic Development Bank funded the Tuan Guru centre of the Muslim Women’s Federation in Strandfontein in 1997 and the Saudi agency Rabita al alam al Islami donated books to the Sayedina Bilal mosque in Khayelitsha in 1999 and planned to build a R80m Islamic Centre in Houghton, but under Saudi control.<sup>1184</sup>

Local Muslim politics sometimes became entangled with these international links. For example, Yusuf da Costa, head of the local Naqshbandi Sufi order, questioned the reason for the regular contact between the MJC and the anti-Sufi Wahhabi Islam of Saudi authorities, as well as the need for a Saudi religious attaché.<sup>1185</sup>

However, geopolitics also linked up with local Muslim politics. The IUC had close relations with the Libyan and Iranian ambassadors,<sup>1186</sup> and criticised Saudi Arabia, Iran’s rival for political and religious leadership in the Gulf. In contrast, the MJC attacked Shia Islam and supported Saudi Arabia. For example, Shaikh Khalid Al-Mushawwaj, the religious attaché of the Saudi Arabian embassy, on 4 November 2000 attended the annual seminar of the MJC on Islamic civilisation in Africa and lauded the missionary work done by the MJC.<sup>1187</sup>

The relations with different Muslim powers were not exclusive and did not necessarily translate into complete agreement. The MJC also had relations with the Iranian embassy and Libya, even if less prominent than those of the IUC. While the IUC’s leader was opposed to the ANC and participation in elections, during the 1999 general elections the Libyan leader Muammar Ghaddafi urged Muslims in SA not to boycott the elections, but to register a vote as “*mujahideen* for the ANC”.<sup>1188</sup>

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<sup>1182</sup> “Global perspectives”, *Al-Miftah*, March/April 1999, p. 2.

<sup>1183</sup> Interview with Yagyah Adams, Athlone, 29 February 2000.

<sup>1184</sup> “Muslim Women Federation gets funding for much-needed centre from Saudi Islamic Development Bank”, *Muslim Views*, May 1997, p. 8 and “Saudis plan R80m Islamic Centre in Houghton”, *Muslim Views*, April 2000, p. 15.

<sup>1185</sup> Da Costa on “Voice of the Cape”, 24 November 2000 at 16h30; letter by Da Costa, *Muslim Views*, March 2001.

<sup>1186</sup> “Radio 786 launch”, *Muslim Views*, October 1995, p. 8.

<sup>1187</sup> Heinrich Matthee, “MJC to launch da’wah programme”, *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 33.

<sup>1188</sup> Tom Lodge, *Consolidating Democracy: South Africa’s Second Popular Election* (Witwatersrand University Press: Johannesburg, 1999), p. 195.

## Iran

Iran's government was one of the few Muslim governments in the Middle East that were seldom if ever directly criticized. The Islamic Revolution in Iran disseminated three ideas to Muslim circles in SA. These were the idea of the Quran as a revolutionary text, an emphasis on the implications of divine unity between the earthly and spiritual spheres, between politics and religion, and on a socio-political order, and the preference for the oppressed.<sup>1189</sup> As important, the spiritual leaders of the Iranian Revolution provided emotional motivation for SA Muslim youths in their struggle against the system of white rule on various grounds. The new rulers came to power through a genuine social revolution and created the first modern state to call itself Islamic. Iran also did progress towards a combination of Islam and democracy, and maintained an assertive independence toward the US.<sup>1190</sup>

US sanctions against Iran were criticized by *Muslim Views* as an effort to prevent the resurgence of Islam. When SA defied the US trade embargo against Iran by signing a bilateral agreement in 1995, this was frontpage news in *Muslim Views*.<sup>1191</sup> A halfpage article consisting of excerpts from a speech by the Iranian foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati against the US and Israel was published in 1996.<sup>1192</sup>

The USA, Israel and the SA Board of Jewish Deputies in September 1996 strongly opposed the visit to SA by Iran's president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani during an African tour that included Sudan, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Their reason was that Iran supported the Shia resistance movement Hizbollah in Lebanon. However, Rafsanjani was warmly welcomed by pres. Mandela on his visit to SA. Iran supplied up to 70% of SA's crude oil needs and in an allusion to the US, Mandela stated that no country had the right to be the world's policeman.<sup>1193</sup> Rafsanjani was also hosted in Pretoria with Sh. Sadullah Khan and other Muslim dignitaries.<sup>1194</sup>

Foreign powers like Iran used local Muslim structures, while serving as a source of money and advice, but many details are not available in the public domain. The Iranian embassy financed the building of a mosque in Windhoek, Namibia and the salaries of two imams, one an Iranian, and the mosque was attended by both local and foreign Muslims.

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<sup>1189</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 83.

<sup>1190</sup> These sentiments were shared by many Muslims worldwide. See Graham Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam* (Palgrave: New York, 2003), p. 102. "Hujjatul Islam Rafsanjani meets prominent Muslim figures", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 7; "From Mi'raj to the Millenium", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 4 (November 1999), pp. 2-3. The 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Iran was celebrated in the Gatesville mosque on 18 February 2000, as advertised in *Cape Argus*, 17 February 2000, p. 7.

<sup>1191</sup> "South Africa defied America by signing bilateral agreement with Iran", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 1.

<sup>1192</sup> "Western propaganda 'baseless'", *Muslim Views*, April 1996, p. 17.

<sup>1193</sup> "Iran and SA sign bilateral agreement" and "South Africa-Iran oil relations", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 8; "Madiba warmly welcomes President of Islamic Republic of Iran", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 6.

<sup>1194</sup> "Madiba warmly welcomes President of Islamic Republic of Iran", "Hujjatul Islam Rafsanjani meets prominent Muslim figures" and "The Jews want to tell us not to invite Rafsanjani", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, pp. 6 and 7.

However, similar examples in neighbouring SA have not been uncovered, although the IUC and the Iranian embassy cultivated close links.<sup>1195</sup>

The operation of predominantly Shia Iran's embassy in a predominantly Sunni Muslim community was sometimes problematic. When the MJC attacked Shia Islam with the IUC leadership in mind, a Moulood message by Sh. Muhammad Sharif Mahdavi, Iranian ambassador, was published prominently, in which he acknowledged doctrinal differences. However, he also indicated his willingness to support dialogue and mentioned efforts by Sh. Mahmood Shaltoot, former head of the Sunni Al Azhar University in Cairo, and the Imams Khomeini and Khamenei to establish common foundations for greater solidarity.

Mahdavi, who played an active role, indicated that the greatest message of the Revolution was the unity of the *ummah* regardless of different schools.<sup>1196</sup> In his messages he also reached out to the Sunni Muslims by stating that Iran was proud that Muslims in SA had been able to preserve Islam's values for 300 years. He mentioned the Shah's alliance with the white governments of SA, and post-Revolution Iran's immediate support of "the oppressed".<sup>1197</sup>

The MJC met the ambassador of Iran several times, also to gain his opinion on the legitimacy of Muslim participation in the 1994 elections.<sup>1198</sup> All the ambassadors, including the Iranian ambassador with whom the IUC had good links, said it was the Quranic right of Muslims to vote, and not only their democratic right, and this influenced the MJC's eventual position in favour of participation.<sup>1199</sup>

When leaving SA in 1998, ambassador Mahdavi expressed concern about the violence and intolerance of Muslims in Cape Town, praised Muslims for their commitment to Islam and their role in development and charity, and reaffirmed Iran's commitment to preserving Islamic values and protecting those Muslims who are subject to massacre and torture, in Africa as well as around the world.<sup>1200</sup>

This extension of protection constituted an assumption of symbolic authority over Muslims. It also was not an isolated incident. The Algerian ambassador made a similar gesture, and in April 1999, before the general elections, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference expressed concern that Muslims in SA were feeling isolated and marginalized.<sup>1201</sup>

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<sup>1195</sup> "Travel feature with Fu'ad Rahman", *Muslim Gazette*, October 2000, p. 8.

<sup>1196</sup> "Message from the Iranian ambassador on the occasion of Ramadan", *Muslim Views*, January 1996, p. 10; "We have not sent you but as a Mercy unto mankind (21:107)", *Muslim Views*, July 1996, p. 6 and "Moulood Message", *Muslim Views*, July 1997, p. 20.

<sup>1197</sup> "Iran-US relations: New US policy unjustified", *Muslim Views*, January 1996, p. 7; "18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Islamic Republic", *Muslim Views*, February 1997, p. 21.

<sup>1198</sup> "MJC envisages new challenges", *Muslim Views*, July 1999, p. 3.

<sup>1199</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 22 March 2000.

<sup>1200</sup> "Iranian ambassador "worried" about Cape Muslims", *Muslim Views*, October 1998, p. 6.

<sup>1201</sup> "To vote or not to vote", *Cape Argus*, 26 May 1999, p. 16.

## Bosnia and Kosovo

The breakup of Yugoslavia after the fall of communism was followed by the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina between Serb forces and Bosnian forces, resulting in widespread killings, mass rapes, ethnic cleansing and the genocide of about 8,000 Bosnian Muslims at Srebrenica in July 1995. The killings of Bosnian Muslims received wide publicity,<sup>1202</sup> and after the massacre at Srebrenica several thousand Muslims attended a protest meeting by the Bosnian Crisis Committee at Athlone Civic Centre in July 1995.

The meeting accused the UN and major super powers of condoning genocide, and wanted the UN arms embargo against Bosnia lifted, a position supported by the Africa Muslim Party.<sup>1203</sup> A motion calling on President Mandela to present Muslim grievances to the outside world was withdrawn when imam Cassiem, who chaired the meeting, stated that Mandela had signed a military pact with Russia, which was supporting the Serbs.<sup>1204</sup>

The meeting called for an army to be raised at 100 mosques to help protect Bosnia. Eastern Cape Muslims calling themselves the Bosnian Holocaust Committee later became involved in the training of a group of Muslims. However, the group's spokesman, Rashaad Davids, stated that the Bosnian government had announced that the military tide had turned in its favour and the mission was called off.<sup>1205</sup> Years afterward, justice minister Dullah Omar stated that many Muslims had wanted to go and assist the Bosnian Muslims. However, only six eventually reached Bosnia and most were locked up by the Bosnian government.<sup>1206</sup>

The July 1995 meeting also asked the MJC and IUC leaders to bury their differences for the sake of Muslims. They then shook hands and embraced each other in a short-lived show of unity. A month later, the MJC strongly condemned an IUC initiative for a united ulama body, a potential competitor.<sup>1207</sup> While transnational concerns could help to mobilize Muslims, they were seldom able to completely override local Muslim political dynamics and divisions.

The Kosovo conflict included two sequential and occasionally parallel armed conflicts. One conflict occurred between Serbian and Yugoslav security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army, an Albanian secessionist guerrilla group, during 1996-1999. Another was the war between Yugoslavia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in

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<sup>1202</sup> "Genocide of Bosnian Muslims continues", *Muslim Views*, May 1995, p. 9.

<sup>1203</sup> "Lift arms embargo on Bosnia", *Muslim Views*, July 1995, p. 22.

<sup>1204</sup> "Unity in sight?", *Muslim Views*, July 1995, p. 1.

<sup>1205</sup> "Eastern Cape Muslims preparing for war in Bosnia", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 1; "Training camps to help Muslims in Bosnia", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 4 and "Bosnian mission called off", *Muslim Views*, September 1995, p. 2.

<sup>1206</sup> Heinrich Matthee, "High profile speakers at Muslim Assembly AGM", *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 26.

<sup>1207</sup> "Unity in sight? Bosnian genocide unites South African Muslims", *Muslim Views*, July 1995, p. 1; "MJC, IUC difference shatters fragile unity pact", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 1 and "IUC unity initiative unnecessary and destructive – MJC", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 5.

1999, during which NATO attacked Yugoslav targets and Albanian guerrillas fought against Yugoslav forces amidst a huge displacement of the Kosovo population.

In the case of Kosovo, the MJC issued a sermon on 20 April 1999 to be delivered in all mosques linked to the MJC. The sermon used references to the Quran and hadith to emphasize the linked destiny and solidarity of all Muslims with each other, and appealed for a small donation to be given to the Muslim leadership in Kosovo. The MJC also requested the ANC government to sponsor a cargo flight to Kosovo and appealed to big business to give non-perishable goods.<sup>1208</sup>

Significantly, the sermon also stated: “May Allah Almighty protect us here in Cape Town from such calamity and help our brethren in the Balkans in their hour of need.”<sup>1209</sup> The examples of Bosnia and Kosovo, but especially of Bosnia, became a codeword for the historical fear among some Muslims that, as a minority in Africa, they could be subjected to oppression and persecution.<sup>1210</sup>

In personal conversations, some clerics also acknowledged apprehension about potential threats to the Muslim minority, while others stated that Islam had always been under siege or that oppression could affect all faiths.<sup>1211</sup> In some cases the anxieties of a minority in Africa, the idea of an anti-Islamic world order, conspiracy theories, and the need to mobilize supporters around evocative themes coalesced. An IUC press release in January 1995, for example, indicated “the fears of Muslims being wiped out by an international conspiracy. The idea is to stem this onslaught while it is still outside the borders of Africa.”<sup>1212</sup> The IUC also decided at its annual meeting in 1997 to alert Muslim embassies and communities throughout the world to “threats to the Muslim community” in SA.<sup>1213</sup>

These events also influenced Muslim opinions about their own systems of political authority and organization. *Muslim Views* said that the Western powers would have intervened quicker to save the Bosnians if the Muslim world had formed an effective lobby.<sup>1214</sup> According to *Boorhaanol Islam*, the genocide of Bosnian Muslims could be linked to their helplessness since the disbandment of the Caliphate in 1924, and the motley successor group of Muslim monarchies, oligarchies and military dictatorships only focused on self-interest. “Ultimately we should strive for the re-establishment of the Caliphate as the panacea for our leadership woes.”<sup>1215</sup>

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<sup>1208</sup> “Jumu’ah on Kosova”, Muslim Judicial Council, 20 April 2000. See also “Call to rally round Kosovo Muslims”, *Ad-Da’wah*, July 1998, p. 4.

<sup>1209</sup> “Jumuah on Kosova”, Muslim Judicial Council, 20 April 1999.

<sup>1210</sup> Also see the advertisements “Hotspice: Bosnian Holocaust”, *Muslim Views*, July 1995, p. 28 and “Hotspice: Tools of Shaytan”, *Muslim Views*, April 1997, p. 27.

<sup>1211</sup> Interviews with Sh. Ishmail Davids, 15 November 2000, with Maulana Ebrahim Khan, 22 November 2000 and with Maulana Abdurrahman Seegers, 22 November 2000;

<sup>1212</sup> “Cape Town Muslims Confront Foreign Governments”, *Muslim Views*, January 1995, p. 1.

<sup>1213</sup> “Summit sets up special group for Muslim security”, *Cape Argus*, 13 November 1997.

<sup>1214</sup> “International, 1995 in retrospect”, *Muslim Views*, December 1995, p. 4.

<sup>1215</sup> “Bosnia”, *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 30 no. 3 (1995), pp. 2-3.

## Chechnya

The first Chechen War between Russia and the predominantly Muslim region of Chechnya from 1994 to 1996 resulted in Chechnya's *de facto* independence as the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, but in August 1999 the Second Chechen War started and reversed this outcome.

The struggle between Russian forces and Chechnya was seen by the Chechen fighters as both a battle for independence and a *jihad* to preserve Islam. Muslim media in Cape Town agreed and also described it as an attempt to ward off Russia's US-supported attempt to control energy reserves and trade routes.<sup>1216</sup> In addition, the bloodshed in Chechnya was seen as an indicator of the impotence and disunity of the Muslim world as a whole. *Muslim Views*, *Ad-Da'wah* and *Al-Miftah* were among the media giving prominent attention to the struggle in Chechnya, with no difference in their positions on the issue.<sup>1217</sup>

The IUC held a protest march attended by about 400 people to US and Russian embassies in Cape Town in January 1995 from Muir Street mosque after the Friday sermon. On 18 December 1999, hundreds of people marched to the Russian embassy in Cape Town to protest against Russian security force actions in Chechnya, with placards extolling that martyrdom was victory, and referring to Russia's failure in Afghanistan.<sup>1218</sup>

Support for the Chechens was also used by local Sufis to increase the credibility of their foreign Sufi shaykh. When Sh. Kabbani of the Naqshbandi order was criticized for his testimony at a forum of the US State department, imam Hassan Walele stated that Sh. Nazeem Haqqani, the Grand Shaikh of the order, regularly prayed for the martyrs in Palestine and that two Chechen commanders had pledged their loyalty to the order.<sup>1219</sup>

## Palestine

The Palestinian struggle for self-determination since the establishment of Israel as a state in 1948 had several dimensions. These included a struggle for land, an Arab nationalist struggle for freedom from Israeli rule, a struggle between a mainly Muslim force intent on recapturing sites that are important to the history and symbolic order of Islam, for

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<sup>1216</sup> "Chechens refuse to surrender their beliefs", *Muslim Views*, July 1995, p. 10; "Victory for Chechnya", *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 27; "Ichkeria – a year of freedom and independence", *Muslim Views*, October 1997, p. 11; "Chechen blood and oil on the hands of Russia, USA" and "Vladimir Putin: killing mastermind", *Muslim Views*, January 2000, p. 17.

<sup>1217</sup> "The lessons of Chechnya", *Muslim Views*, February 2000, p. 14; "Chechens: Islamic Warriors", *Al-Miftah*, November/December 1999, pp. 1, 12; "Chechnya's victory over Russia – Why no celebration?", *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 22; "Chechen Genocide amidst the world's blind eye..." and "Worshippers massacred in Chechen Vedeno Central Mosque", *Al-Miftah*, February 2000, p. 2; "Chechen counter-attack, Russians suffer heavy losses", *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1999, p. 6; "No tears for Chechnya", *Ad-Da'wah*, January 2000, p. 6.

<sup>1218</sup> "IUC mobilizes Muslims to demonstrate solidarity for Chechen mujahideen", *Al-Miftah*, vol. 3 no. 9 (January/February 2000), p. 5; and "Chechnya: Greetings from the land of battle", *Al-Miftah*, February 2000, p. 3 and p. 11.

<sup>1219</sup> Interview with imam Hassan Walele, Voice of the Cape, 24 November 2000.



example the Al Aqsa mosque, and a struggle to create an Islamic state. Similar to other Muslim communities internationally, the Palestinian issue evoked strong emotions among Muslims in South Africa.

Most Muslims are non-white and the close relationship between Israel and white governments in South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s also reinforced a strong anti-Zionist sentiment. However, more hardline Muslim views on Israel first emerged after the founding of Qibla in 1980 and the Sabra and Shatila massacres of Palestinian refugees during the 1982 Lebanon War. Still, support for the Palestinians was unequivocal. For example, almost all the media articles in the period surveyed did not reflect any support for Israel or a discussion including Israeli survival needs.<sup>1220</sup>

Muslim media, prominent Muslims in the ANC, the IUC and the MJC leadership saw Israel as a small island of 4-5 million illegal settlers among the 200 million Muslims of the Middle East.<sup>1221</sup> MJC president Ebrahim Gabriels also acted as chairman of the Al Aqsa Foundation of SA, which raised funds to improve the infrastructure for Palestinians.<sup>1222</sup> After Israel attacked civilian targets in Lebanon in 1996, Sh. Nazim Mohamed, president of the MJC and the UUCSA, condemned the “persistent atrocities against mankind” of the Israeli government in a letter to the *Cape Argus* daily newspaper, and wrote: “(W)e call on the Muslim *Ummah* to rise against the Zionist enemy.”<sup>1223</sup>

An incident in Hebron in Israel in 1997, in which a supporter of the Jewish extremist Kach group distributed posters depicting Mohammed as a pig writing in the Quran, led to Muslim protests in Pretoria and Cape Town. Shortly thereafter, a home that housed a Jewish book center in Cape Town was firebombed, but the MJC did not condemn the incident.<sup>1224</sup>

However, the political struggle between Palestinian secularists such as Al-Fatah and Yasser Arafat on the one hand, and the Islamist Hamas movement and shaykh Ahmed Yassin on the other, was also noted among Muslims in South Africa. Irrespective of local differences, most groups and media, including Radio 786, the IUC, *Al-Miftah* and *Muslim Views* supported Hamas.<sup>1225</sup> The MJC’s president in 1999, Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels,

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<sup>1220</sup> The basic sentiment was captured in a headline “Israel celebrates fifty years of tyranny”, *Muslim Views*, March 1998, p. 3. See also “Repression without hope is harder to bear”, *Muslim Views*, January 1997, p. 14; “Remember Al-Aqsa”, *Muslim Views*, February 1997, p. 8. An article copied from a foreign publication, *Economic and Political Weekly*, which focused on Israel’s economic problems, is a partial exception. See “Israel: The Dilemmas of Growth”, *Muslim Views*, February 1997, p. 28.

<sup>1221</sup> Speech by Sh. Gabriels at a mass meeting on Al Aqsa, Surrey Estate mosque, broadcast on Voice of the Cape, 5 October 2000 at 22h30; Shafiq Morton, “Peace Process Irreversible”, *Muslim Views*, November 1995, p. 11; “Zionists hail Temple of Doom”, *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 25; “Palestinians bear brunt of Zionist occupation”, *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 22; “The liberation of Quds (Jerusalem) from the butchers of the zionists”, *Al-Miftah*, January/February 1999, p. 6.

<sup>1222</sup> “Al Aqsa Foundation of South Africa”, *Ad-Da’wah* vol. 6 no. 8 (December 1999), p. 10.

<sup>1223</sup> Letter, *Cape Argus*, 24 April 1996, p. 31.

<sup>1224</sup> Steven Roth Institute for the Study of Racism and Antisemitism, *Global Report 1997* at <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw97-8/south-africa.html>.

<sup>1225</sup> “P.L.O. sign away rights”, *Al-Miftah*, November/December 1998, p. 1; “Occupied Palestine”, *Al-Miftah*, March/April 1999, p. 2; “Arafat Unpopular” and “Arafat asked to resign”, *Muslim Views*, April 1995, p. 9; “Hamas – ‘Palestinian civil war awaits’”, *Muslim Views*, August 1997, p. 2; “Prisoner of Faith: Hassan Salameh”, *Muslim Views*, September 1997, p. 4; “Hamas leader released”, *Muslim Views*, October

reflected widespread sentiments when he stated that the MJC believed Arafat had betrayed the Palestinian cause and that the MJC favoured relations with Palestinian Hamas spiritual leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin.<sup>1226</sup>

In May 1996, a strong Qibla-led crowd of almost 1000 protestors marched on the Israeli embassy, protesting at Israel's anti-Muslim atrocities and the bombing of a neutral UN camp.<sup>1227</sup> The police shot rubber bullets and birdshot into the crowd, injuring twelve people. Hundreds of IUC demonstrators protested against Israeli occupation of Palestinian land on the last Friday of Ramadan in January 1998, a day designated as Al Quds day by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, while lectures were held at the Muir Street Mosque.<sup>1228</sup>

The jubilee celebrations of the establishment of Israel as a state in Cape Town in May 1998 elicited a Qibla demonstration, with protestors chanting "One Zionist, one bullet" and "Viva Hizbollah and Hamas." In letters to the *Cape Times* regional newspaper, MJC secretary general Shaykh Achmat Sedick condemned South Africa's participation in the jubilee. He also stated that "the Jews and Zionists are guilty of the damnest form of anarchy and massacres which they leveled against the Palestinians."<sup>1229</sup>

In addition, under pressure of the Palestinian National Authority and Israel, the ANC government refused to grant a visa to Sh. Ahmed Yasin of Hamas to visit SA. In a telephone interview from Kuwait that was broadcast on Radio 786 and relayed to a meeting at Gatesville mosque, Yasin denounced all Zionists as terrorists. Qibla protested against the government decision outside the gates of Parliament, and Shaykh Ebrahim Gabriels of the MJC declared that Muslims did not recognise the Israeli state, since it had been founded illegally on Palestinian land.<sup>1230</sup>

*Muslim Views* also criticized the ANC government for this decision under pressure. It linked the ANC's willingness to compromise in this case with its reluctance to address land restitution while leaving intact the economic power of multinationals and conglomerates under the oversight of the IMF and World Bank. Expediency and economics were seen as the reason why the visa was refused, since SA's exports to Israel were greater than those to the whole of the Middle East and North Africa, while 75% of all Israeli exports to Africa were destined for SA.<sup>1231</sup>

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1997, p. 10; "Hamas in SA-PNA compromise jam", *Muslim Views*, May 1998, p. 32; "Arafat's PLO billions", *Muslim Views*, April 2000, p. 23; "Sheikh Yasin leads Hamas towards moderation", *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1997, p. 16; "Occupied Palestine", *Al-Miftah*, August/September 1999, p. 2.

<sup>1226</sup> "MJC envisages new challenges", *Muslim Views*, July 1999, p. 3. See also "True Nature of the Palestinian Authority", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 2000, p. 2.

<sup>1227</sup> "Muslims March On Israeli Embassy", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 3.

<sup>1228</sup> "Quds Day demo in City", *Muslim Views*, January 1998, p. 3.

<sup>1229</sup> Milton Shain, "Antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the 'New South Africa'", *Covenant*, vol. 1 issue 2 April 2007 at <http://www.covenant.idc.ac.il/en/vol1/issue2/shain.html> and "Israel's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 1998, p. 2.

<sup>1230</sup> Milton Shain, "Antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the 'New South Africa'", *Covenant*, vol. 1 issue 2 April 2007 at <http://www.covenant.idc.ac.il/en/vol1/issue2/shain.html>.

<sup>1231</sup> "Hamas in SA-PNA compromise jam", *Muslim Views*, May 1998, p. 32.

Both Radio 786 and the Voice of the Cape gave considerable attention to the Palestinian struggle, especially after the second Intifada started in September 2000.<sup>1232</sup> Emotions in the community about Israeli actions were running high after the start of the second Intifada, and were the basis of communal mobilization. The Palestinian issue formed an important theme of Muslim mobilization and self-assertion. However, it also formed part of the contestation between various Muslim groups and leaders, as none could afford to be perceived as too ambivalent about the Palestinian cause.

The MJC organized volunteers to monitor the media and placed a daily advertisement in the *Cape Argus* to refute the statement by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies that the media was biased towards the Palestinians. Mass meetings were held on 9 October 2000 at Surrey Estate mosque and on 12 October 2000 at the Paarl mosque. R221 000 was raised and on 12 October 2000, businessmen met at the MJC HQ to decide on ways to boycott Israeli-linked businesses.<sup>1233</sup>

Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels, president of the biggest organization of clerics, the MJC, held a speech at a major rally in support of the Palestinians on 5 October 2000 which combined anti-Zionism, anti-Jewish sentiments, conspiracy theory and pro-Palestinian sentiments: “You need to understand that the world today, the United Nations and the United States of America and most of the governments of the world are controlled by the Zionists, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and for lack of a better word, the Freemasons. The Zionists and their allies are the real criminals, the real gangsters and the real terrorists, not only of Palestine, but of the whole world.”

He also linked the Palestinian issue with local history and politics. “Israel is an illegitimate, a usurped state. As the white apartheid regime of SA has collapsed, you will collapse, for Allah says: ‘Most certainly, the oppressor will not succeed.’ You, the Jews, were the ones who killed most of the Prophets. The Jews say ‘It was the Zionist’ and the Zionist says ‘It was the Jew’, but when the Israeli Zionist unjustly kills a Palestinian or usurps the land of the Palestinians, the Jew does not stop him nor even condemn him. And Tony Leon was asked to make a statement about this crisis, and he refused. He refused because he is serving the Jews and the whites and because his future wife is part of the Israeli terrorist army.”<sup>1234</sup>

The Palestinian issue also constituted an area of competition between the MJC and its opponents. The Quds Support Committee organized a protest meeting at the Greenpoint stadium on 14 October 2000, attended by more than 1500 people and representatives of the Naqshbandi order, PAGAD, MAGO and ICSA. It included speeches by Anwar Shaikh, who linked the Palestinian struggle with anti-globalisation demonstrations in Seattle and Prague, the Bambata uprising in SA and Black Consciousness leader Steve

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<sup>1232</sup> Voice of the Cape, 10 October 2000 at 17h30 and 17 October 2000, broadcast at 19h30; speech by Hendricks at MJC Dawah function on “Islamic civilization in Africa”, Schaapkraal, 4 November 2000; “Direct provocation against Palestinians”, *Ad-Da’wah*, November 2000, p. 8.

<sup>1233</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, 5 October 2000. See also “Let’s cool it in Cape Town” (editorial), *Cape Times*, 13 October 2000, p. 10.

<sup>1234</sup> Speech by Sh. Gabriels at a mass meeting on Al Aqsa, Surrey Estate mosque, broadcast on Voice of the Cape, 5 October 2000.

Biko. Abeedah Roberts of PAGAD, Anwar Nagia of the District Six Beneficiary Trust and Maulana Mukadam of ICOSA also made speeches.<sup>1235</sup>

At the mass open-air prayer meeting held on the field of the stadium, prayers were said for those who died in the Palestinian struggle and the martyrs of Sharpeville and imam Haron. Thereafter, Israeli and US flags were ceremonially burned amidst three cries each of three slogans “Death to Israel”, “Death to America” and “Long live Palestine, long live”. One of the resolutions condemned the ‘silence of the United States in the face of the killing and maiming’ of Palestinians. Afterwards, some vehicles and shops were damaged, which was condemned by *Muslim Views* and the organizers of the meeting.<sup>1236</sup>

The Intifada received front page coverage in *Muslim Views*, with photographs of the death of Muhammad al-Durra, a twelve-year-old, at the hands of Israeli soldiers, and a photo of the burning of the Israeli flag at the Greenpoint protest meeting.<sup>1237</sup> Likewise, Radio 786 and Voice of the Cape gave extensive coverage of the Intifada at the end of 2000, and also to local protest actions.<sup>1238</sup>

Smaller marches and demonstrations were also held and covered in the Muslim media. One such event was a march announced on Radio 786 on 3 November 2000. It was a two-kilometer march by about 600 people of all ages from Husami mosque in Cravenby to a main avenue nearby and back on a hot day, in which about 30 placards were displayed; most participants were however lethargic while the women were more vocal.<sup>1239</sup>

The Intifada also became part of the local elections of 5 December 2000. Dullah Omar, as ANC Minister of Transport, indicated during the election campaign in November 2000 that Muslims could participate in three ways in the struggle for Palestine. These included monitoring government policy, which could sometimes be erroneous, providing finance and clarifying the fact that the issue was not about violence by both sides but about occupation by a foreign power. His brother Adam Omar, president of the Muslim Assembly, stated that the struggle in Palestine was a *jihad* in which all Muslims should be involved.<sup>1240</sup>

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<sup>1235</sup> Personal attendance on 14 October 2000.

<sup>1236</sup> Personal attendance on 14 October 2000; 19h00 news bulletin, Radio 786, 16 October 2000; “The battle for Al Quds”, *Muslim Views*, October 2000, p. 1.

<sup>1237</sup> “The battle for Al-Quds”, *Muslim Views*, October 2000, p. 1.

<sup>1238</sup> Voice of the Cape covered sermons and meetings on the issue on 5 October and 9 October 2000. Radio 786 announced the times and venues for marches and demonstrations beforehand, including the protest march on Palestine at Husami mosque in Cravenby on 3 November 2000.

<sup>1239</sup> Personal attendance. The march was announced at the radio at 11h00 and took place from about 13h20 to 14h00.

<sup>1240</sup> Heinrich Matthee, “High-profile speakers at Muslim Assembly AGM”, *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 26 and notes at meeting.

Posters sponsored by Muslim ANC supporters<sup>1241</sup> were used on the Cape Flats in the local election campaign, stating “A vote for the DA is a vote for Israel”, with both the “DA” and “Israel” in the same blue lettering, plus red blood-like spots on a blue-and-white Israel flag beneath it.<sup>1242</sup> In contrast, Zihaad Hatties, NNP candidate for Ward 75 (New Woodlands/Colorado) condemned Israel and considered those Palestinians who died in the Intifada as martyrs.<sup>1243</sup> Rashaad Hayns, NNP candidate for Ward 76 (Woodlands and Lentegeur), accused the ANC of calling all Muslim fundamentalists terrorists and of selling arms to Israel.<sup>1244</sup>

### **Anti-Jewish sentiments and the Holocaust**

By the year 2000, approximately 80,000 Jews remained in South Africa out of a total population of some 43 million after a steady decline since the high point of about 119,000 in the 1980s, with about 18,000 people in the Cape Town area after 1994. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) acted as the main community representative.

Relations between the Muslim and Jewish communities were occasionally tense due to events in the Middle East, with a slow deterioration punctuated by mostly Muslim responses to events in the Middle East. However, anti-Zionist themes and responses to Middle Eastern politics rather than anti-Jewish and local politics dominated the relationship, with most Muslims eventually voting for the Democratic Alliance under the leadership of Tony Leon, a South African Jew and a supporter of a two-state solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.<sup>1245</sup>

There was some scepticism in Muslim groups and media about the extent of the Jewish Holocaust during World War II and whether it was the outcome of war or a deliberate German government policy at the time. The emphasis on the Holocaust in public media was seen as an effort to legitimize Israel’s existence. However, direct Holocaust denial featured in a few instances only.

In January 1997, Dr. Ahmed Huber, a Swiss convert to Islam, appeared on Radio 786 and referred to “the Holocaust swindle.” Radio 786 agreed to broadcast an apology after the SABJD complained to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission.<sup>1246</sup> The SAJBD also became involved in a protracted legal battle with Radio 786 after an hour-long program broadcast on 8 May 1998, in which Dr Yacub Zaki, a historian at the Muslim Institute in London, denied the Holocaust as a deliberate German government policy and linked it to the circumstances of war resulting in epidemics. The battle turned into an issue of free speech and reached the Constitutional Court.

However, the issue of the Jewish Holocaust mostly did not figure prominently in Muslim media discussions, and the appropriation of the term to express Muslim suffering was

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<sup>1241</sup> Gulam Savant, “ANC, DA set for tough challenge,” *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 27; Hendrik Coetzee, “Kiersers kan SA in nuwe koers stuur,” *Die Burger*, 28 November 2000, p. 3 and interview with Farid Sayed, 9 December 2000.

<sup>1242</sup> Personal observations, 13 November 2000.

<sup>1243</sup> “Straight Talk,” Radio 786, 17 November 2000.

<sup>1244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1245</sup> “Kritiek teen DA wil net aandag aflei - Leon,” *Die Burger*, 6 November 2000, p. 6.

<sup>1246</sup> Jamiel McWilliams, “The too often promised land,” *Muslim Views*, January 2000, p. 15.

more common. The term “global holocaust” was used by the IUC to describe the situation of Muslims in several conflict zones, including Palestine, Kashmir, Algeria, Bosnia, Somalia, and Chechnya.<sup>1247</sup> The term “holocaust” was also used to refer to black slavery, with Jewish protagonists being held responsible.<sup>1248</sup>

The MJC leadership also compared Israeli conduct to the Holocaust. MJC secretary general Achmat Sedick wrote in 1998: “If this (the Deir Yassin massacre) is what the Jews are celebrating and pride themselves on a Day of Independence then they have learnt nothing from the Holocaust and what the Nazis did to them as a nation. Indeed, they are in many ways emulating the past in a more barbaric and inhuman fashion.”<sup>1249</sup>

### Islamist extremism

While most Muslim groups and media supported Islamist movements in the Middle East, most did not support an extremist approach of global political violence to establish Islamic orders. However, according to the IUC’s Cassiem, Muslims had a duty to submit to the Quran, and a verse said “Fighting has been prescribed for you”.

This militant approach was necessary in order to find a solution, not only in SA, but also in Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan and the rest of the world. “Unless we destroy the conceptual foundations of these evil systems (Apartheid, Zionism, Colonialism, Imperialism and Neo-Colonialism, all examples of Kufr), then we can never succeed to establish a just social order.”<sup>1250</sup> Muslims had to acquire the requisite skills for *jihad*.<sup>1251</sup> “We are the ones who are, without fear of contradiction, the most fearless in the fight against oppression, for the veil between life and death does not exist for us.”<sup>1252</sup>

*Al-Miftah*, and at different times certain factions in PAGAD, glorified the worldwide struggle of Islamists and martyrdom. The first edition of *Al-Miftah* even contained a photograph of Islamist militants with explosives belts and headbands with Islamic inscriptions. The underscript stated: “This is a test of iman (faith). Can there be a bigger sacrifice? Is our Iman at this level? Are we talkers or doers?” The caption of the frontpage photograph, a wounded Muslim woman and child, linked Hussain’s centuries-old battle against Yazid at Karbala with historical South African and current events: “Karbala, Sharpeville, Sarajevo, Algeria, Kashmir, Palestine”.<sup>1253</sup>

At an IUC “March for Justice on Kashmir” on 1 April 2000, one of the slogans shouted expressed the IUC discourse concisely: “One oppressor, one bullet/In Bosnia/In India/In

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<sup>1247</sup> “Islam under Attack”, *IUC News*, March 1995, p. 3.

<sup>1248</sup> “Jews’ role in Holocaust of Black Slavery”, *Al-Miftah*, January/February 1999, p. 15.

<sup>1249</sup> “Israel’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary”, *Ad-Da’wah*, No. 17 (May 1998), p. 2. For a similar comparison, see “Berlin site dedicated to memory of hollow cause”, *Ad-Da’wah*, February 2000, p. 4.

<sup>1250</sup> *Chairman’s address*, IUC Annual General Meeting, Athlone Technical College, 24 November 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1251</sup> Achmad Cassiem, *Lecture on Interim Government* (video, 1991).

<sup>1252</sup> Achmad Cassiem, *Anniversary of 16 June 1976* (video).

<sup>1253</sup> “Martyrdom, Tragedy & Treachery”, *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1997, pp. 1-3 on p. 2. See also PAGAD’s Eid-al-Fitr message, 1999.

Kosovo/In Palestine/In South Africa.”<sup>1254</sup> PAGAD also linked the struggle against drug and gangsterism in SA with those in Chechnya, Palestine, Algeria, Kosovo “and all over the world where Believers are being brutalised, slaughtered and oppressed merely because they submit to the Truth”.<sup>1255</sup>

*Muslim Views* and the IUC saw the imprisonment in the US of Sh. Omar Abdur-Rahman for his involvement in terrorist activities as anti-Islamic and a conspiracy by the FBI.<sup>1256</sup> Cassiem stated that Sh. Omar Abdur-Rahman, who was imprisoned in the US for his role in the World Trade Center bombing in 1993, had been unjustly imprisoned by the American imperialists because he taught Islam in its pure form, and *Al-Miftah* published a message from Abdur-Rahman.<sup>1257</sup> On 15 January 1996, a day before his sentencing and appeal, Radio 786 conducted a live interview with Abdur-Rahman from his cell in New York, in which he spoke about his case and the responsibility of Muslims before he was cut off by the prison authorities.<sup>1258</sup>

Ishtiaque Parker, a Cravenby resident who played a role in the apprehension of World Trade center bomber Yusuf Ramzi by cooperating with the Pakistani authorities and then the FBI, was isolated locally when he returned. Even the MJC refused to listen to his version of events, stating that it was an international issue that they could not do anything about.<sup>1259</sup>

When Al Qaeda attacked hotels in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, a more differentiated response appeared. Prof. Suleman Dangor, a frequent columnist in *Muslim Views*, acknowledged the legitimacy of armed struggle in some circumstances, but within a clear traditionalist Islamic framework: the end did not justify the means, and Islamic law still applied. Non-combatants were not to be targeted, and taking the lives of others was only justified as punishment for murder, self-defense or war.<sup>1260</sup>

Sayed as editor of *Muslim Views* also clearly stated that the killing of innocent people in Kenya and Tanzania, as well as in Sudan and Afghanistan, was terrorism. He also emphasized that terrorism could be exercised at different levels, including state-sponsored terrorism, of which Muslims were the biggest group of victims. The global media’s habit of linking terrorism to Muslims denigrated a global community of a billion people for the sins of a few bigoted radicals, who were condemned by most Muslims and whose activities had no basis in Islamic law.<sup>1261</sup>

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<sup>1254</sup> Personal attendance at march, Cape Town, 1 April 2000.

<sup>1255</sup> *Eid message* (PAGAD, 2000).

<sup>1256</sup> “Sh Abdul-Rahman’s life sentence – America fighting Islam”, *Muslim Views*, February 1996, p. 5 and “FBI framed Sheikh Omar Abdur-Rahman”, *Muslim Views*, June 1997, p. 4.

<sup>1257</sup> Achmad Cassiem, “Eid Message”, *Al-Miftah*, vol. 2 no. 3 (January/February 1999), p. 1; “Message from Sheikh Omar Abdul Raghman – in an American prison”, *Al-Miftah*, vol. 2 no. 3, p. 3; “Free Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman – America’s prisoner no. 1”, *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1997, p. 6.

<sup>1258</sup> “Radio 786 Global Perspectives”, *IUC News*, January/February 1997, p. 10.

<sup>1259</sup> “Life after Ramzi”, *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 3.

<sup>1260</sup> “Channeling Muslim discontent”, *Muslim Views*, September 1998, p. 18.

<sup>1261</sup> “The truth about terrorism”, *Muslim Views*, August 1998, p. 32.

*Al-Miftah* followed a different approach. It denied that Osama bin Laden's group could be involved in the bombings, since their struggle was to remove US troops from Saudi Arabia. It also revealed the background of Bin Laden as a billionaire involved in the Afghanistan struggle against Soviet troops, stating that he was using his wealth effectively, instead of hoarding it in contravention of the Quran. *Al-Miftah* also referred to the Saudi government as being corrupt and that it had removed Bin Laden's passport without good reason.<sup>1262</sup>

Tanzanian Khalfan Khamis Mohamed was arrested by the FBI on 5 October 1999 in Cape Town for involvement in the US embassy bombing in Dar-es-Salaam on 7 August 1998, in which 11 people had died. Initially, he had been granted residence as a political refugee and he had been employed by a Muslim businessman at an Athlone restaurant. His application to renew his status was rejected and he was detained without bail and extradited, although no extradition treaty existed between the US and SA.<sup>1263</sup>

Much of the support by Cassiem, *Al-Miftah*, PAGAD and the IUC for extremists had to do with their symbolic defiance of what was perceived as international enemies of Muslims and Islam. For example, while Cassiem and others drew extensively on themes in the Khomeinist discourse within Shia Islam, they were also apologists for Hamas, which had grown from the Egyptian-based Muslim Brotherhood traditions of Islamism.

While they supported Abdur-Rahman and later Osama bin Laden, who belonged in the militant and anti-Sufi Salafist tradition of some Gulf Sunni Arabs, they did not openly draw on the writings of militant Salafi theoreticians like Abu Musab al-Suri or Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi. The strong and growing adherence to Sufi thinking, also among Islamist activists, may have played a role in this regard. While their support had little to do with the particularly militant Islamist beliefs of activists, and more with their symbolic defiance, a radical transnational dimension to Muslim identity did infuse their politics. In the case of Radio 786 and *Al-Miftah*, the emphasis on this transnational dimension in propaganda and mobilization, compared to those of Voice of the Cape, *Ad-Dawah* and *Boorhaanol Islam*, was prominent to the point of dominance.

When urban terrorism probably linked to militant PAGAD supporters emerged in 1998, attacks were also aimed at various targets with symbolic links to the US. The bombings of Planet Hollywood at the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, a Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet in Athlone on 8 January 1999, the New York Bagels restaurant in Seapoint on 10 June and the bomb near the US consulate in Cape Town on 29 August were among these attacks.<sup>1264</sup>

At the same time, Islamism in PAGAD's discourse was also linked to youth dynamics and the need for local group solidarities against gangs. It also became a manner of

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<sup>1262</sup> "United States of Terror", *Al-Miftah*, September/October 1998, p. 2. After the Al Qaeda attacks on 11 September 2001, Cassiem also denied involvement by Bin Laden, claiming that it was an Israeli plot.

<sup>1263</sup> "International miscarriage of justice", *Muslim Views*, October 1999, p. 3; "More arrests expected as US embassy bombing suspect held in Cape Town", *Cape Times*, 11 October 1999, p. 5.

<sup>1264</sup> Botha, *Fear in the City*, op. cit.



asserting masculinity, and was useful in gaining media attention. However, it remained limited by its small popular base and government responses, which focused on combating crime, and the authoritarian and legalist approach of the local clerics.<sup>1265</sup>

### Tricentenary re-ethnicization

The transnational dimension of Muslim identities in the Cape was heavily determined by struggles and developments in the Middle East. Nevertheless, historical Southeast Asian elements in Islamic heritage, which had periodically dominated or marked Muslim identities during the first three centuries in SA, were recast in 1994 to form an important facet of many local Muslim identities.

This was especially the case with festivities in Cape Town in March 1994 that celebrated three centuries of Islam in southern Africa. A Tricentenary conference at the University of South Africa on 5-7 August 1994 was organized by academics and was attended by foreign scholars and a small group of local thinkers. The local thinkers included Shuaib Omar, Ebrahim Moosa, Muhammad Haron, Faried Esack, Shamiel Jeppie and Naeem Jennah. Most of them were from the progressive Islam stream, were not representative of most clerics and had some influence in the non-Muslim media sphere and academia, but limited influence in the broader Muslim community.<sup>1266</sup>

In contrast, the Shaykh Yusuf Tricentenary Commemoration Committee, founded by social worker and community historian Achmat Davids, organized a tricentenary celebration that attracted thousands of Cape Muslims to ceremonies and rallies. It enjoyed the support of the MJC, most clerics and most Muslims in the Western Cape. Boorhaanol Islam remarked that it coincided with the 1994 elections and stated: "It signals our inalienable historical right to our way of life in the new era."<sup>1267</sup>

The Shaikh Yusuf Tricentenary Committee also gave attention to transnational aspects. It sent members to the Islamic Arts Foundation in England, the Mufti of Istanbul Salahuddin Kaya, and Dr. Hamid al Ghabid of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference in Turkey to market the event. A *dhikr* program was held at mosques on 31 March 1994; at the Boorhaanol mosque, Indonesian and Malaysian *qarra* rendered the Quran.<sup>1268</sup>

On Friday 1 April, a uniform sermon centred upon the life of Shaykh Yusuf and the implications for the *ummah* was delivered at all mosques in the Western Cape. At the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront, there was a Malaysian cultural demonstration including cuisine, music and the arts, sponsored by the national airline.<sup>1269</sup> In addition, 300 large pots of food were distributed at various mosques to symbolize Shaykh Yusuf's work

<sup>1265</sup> See previous chapter and Abdulkader Tayob, "Jihad against Drugs in Cape Town: A Discourse-Centred Analysis", *Social Dynamics*, vol. 22 no. 2 (1996), pp. 23-29.

<sup>1266</sup> "International Tricentenary Conference at UNISA", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 29 no. 3 (1995), p. 57.

<sup>1267</sup> "Commemoration", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 29 no. 1 (1994), pp. 2-3 on p. 3.

<sup>1268</sup> "Tri-Centenary Report", *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 7; "Tri-Centenary Report", *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 10.

<sup>1269</sup> "Tri-Centenary Report", *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 10.

among the poor, and the festival would be completed with thousands of Muslim families assembling at his grave in Faure.

On 2 April a mass pageant of tens of Muslim organizations culminated in District Six with a mass prayer meeting. Thereafter, the Tricentenary was officially launched at a rally on 2 April 1994 in the Good Hope Centre in Cape Town. The Secretary General of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, Hamid al-Ghabid, Nelson Mandela and Datu Seri Abdu Razak Najib, the defence minister of Malaysia, were the main speakers.<sup>1270</sup> Najib, who spoke of Muslims rightly rediscovering their roots, received a far more enthusiastic welcome than Mandela, who was also jeered by a part of the crowd.<sup>1271</sup>

Although the impression was sometimes created that it was a national and international commemoration, it was centred in urban Cape Town and the non-Indian, non-white and non-black section of the Muslim community. Although only about 50% of the Muslims in SA are in the Cape region, the celebrations were marked by a revived local Malay identity in many events. In spite of most early Muslims coming from what are now parts of Indonesia, not Malaysia, and a significant Indian community among Muslims, themes of Muslims returning to their imaginary Malay origins and a more pure Islamic heritage dominated the Indonesian component, and the South Asian component was virtually excluded.<sup>1272</sup>

The Malaysian component, constructed and consisting of different elements from different historical periods, was represented as an unchanging primordial identity. The organizers wore contemporary Malaysian clothing and received monetary support from the Malaysian government. A Cape Malaysian Chamber of Business was established.<sup>1273</sup> Jeppie states that the Malaysian government wanted to promote Malay identity because of internal Malaysian competition between the Muslim community and its non-Muslim Chinese population and to simultaneously support the idea of a de-ethnicized non-Arabic Islam.<sup>1274</sup>

While Davids was accorded an audience with Indonesian president Muhammad Suharto, the Indonesian consciousness of links to Shaykh Yusuf had largely disappeared from Indonesian public consciousness and had been resurrected by the government.<sup>1275</sup> Pres. Suharto donated money for the upgrading of the Faure kramat and mosque after a meeting with the MJC, making the MJC the custodians of the money.<sup>1276</sup> *Ad-Da'wah* also

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<sup>1270</sup> "Tricentenary Launch", *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 29 no. 3 (1994), pp. 70-71.

<sup>1271</sup> Shamil Jeppie, "Commemorations and Identities: The 1994 Tercentenary of Islam in South Africa", in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Scholars Press: Atlanta, Georgia 1996), pp. 73-91 on p. 81.

<sup>1272</sup> Jeppie, op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>1273</sup> "Pursuing trade relations with Malaysia", *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 26. See also Jeppie, op. cit., p. 83.

<sup>1274</sup> Jeppie, op. cit., pp. 80-82; "Tricentenary Launch", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 3 (1994), pp. 70-71; "Achmat Davids honoured in Indonesia", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 3 1994, p. 63.

<sup>1275</sup> Jeppie, op. cit., p. 85.

<sup>1276</sup> "Finances and monetary matters", *Ad-Da'wah*, vol. 4 no. 9 (January 1998), p. 2.

gave much space to a defence of the Indonesian government over the East Timor issue in 1997.<sup>1277</sup>

Davids saw South Africa as one nation in which the destiny of the Muslims was linked with that of the nation, and Muslims' role in a history of struggle was projected into the future, with Muslims promoting the social conscience of the early Muslims.<sup>1278</sup> The discourse of the commemoration did include themes from the struggle against white rule, including a march from District Six. However, it did not mention the fact that some Muslims in the first two centuries, including Shaykh Yusuf, were not opposed to slavery or to some forms of segregation.<sup>1279</sup>

The main discourse of the Tricentenary was an effort to move away from an Arabic-centered Islam to a re-imagined Malay substitute identity in the new political dispensation. However, the Arab-centered discourses of clerics schooled in Saudi Arabia and Egypt continued to be influential. Of the 20 lecturers of the Islamic College of SA in 1995, 17 had studied at Muslim institutions outside SA, 13 of them in Arabian countries. Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India and Pakistan had been the most prominent study destinations.<sup>1280</sup>

Apart from diverse Arabic influences, South Asian Islam in the form of the Tablighi Jamaat and clerics educated in India and Pakistan, Qibla's combination of SA class analysis and Khomeinist ideology, secularist, modernist and postmodernist discourses were also present. While the Tricentenary reinforced a Malaysian and Cape Malay dimension to the identities of many Muslims in the Cape, other discourses also continued to exert their influence.<sup>1281</sup>

## Global interactions

At the third Parliament of the World's Religions, held in Cape Town during the week of 1 to 8 December, a few thousand people attended. The MJC, like the Dutch Reformed Church, only had observer status. The IUC opposed the proceedings but privately tried to confer with some delegates, such as the exiled leader of the Islamic Trend Movement of Tunisia, Shaykh Rashid Ghannouchi. A few activists of MAGO held demonstration against the event. However, the vast majority of Muslims did not attend the event.<sup>1282</sup>

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<sup>1277</sup> "Indonesian South African Friendship Society (ISAF)", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1997, p. 5.

<sup>1278</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "The Function of Islam in the South African Political Process: Defining a Community in a Nation", *Journal for the Study of Religion*, vol. 11 no. 2 (1998), pp. 15-32 on pp. 24-25.

<sup>1279</sup> Shamil Jeppie, "Commemorations and Identities: The 1994 Tercentenary of Islam in South Africa", discussed in Tamara Sonn (ed.), *Islam and the Question of Minorities* (Scholars Press: Atlanta 1996), pp. 1-26 on pp. 17-18. See also *Submission To The Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, Muslim Youth Movement of South Africa, 18 November 1997 at <http://786.co.za/mym/trc.htm>.

<sup>1280</sup> "Islamic College of South Africa" (advertisement), *Muslim Views*, November 1995, p. 8.

<sup>1281</sup> Jeppie, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>1282</sup> "Impressive foreign Muslim presence at PWR", *Muslim Views*, January 2000, p. 3 and "Parliament of the World's Religions: A NON-EVENT", *Al-Miftah*, February 2000, p. 15; "Religions preach unity as Muslim group protests", *Cape Times*, 2 December 1999, p. 4. The low attendance by local Muslims was ascribed to the climate of intolerance and threats during a PWR discussion of the issue on 6 December 1999.

The global position of Muslims being under siege was used locally, also in internal struggles. For example, when facing pressure because of a secret letter to the IBA that was interpreted as an attack on the IUC, the MJC-aligned MBA stated that Cape Muslims were united on Palestine and that the letter may be a ploy to distract Muslims from the issue.<sup>1283</sup>

However, local platforms and discourses were also used to link up with Muslim discourses about the global situation. The MJC was invited to hold a prayer meeting on behalf of the Muslim community on Freedom Day, 27 April 1994, and used it to state that rule in line with Islamic injunctions would lead to prosperity. The prayer ended with a transnational focus: "O Allah! Destroy and remove the perpetrators of violence and destabilisation; the perpetrators of usurping lands and that of anarchy; and the perpetrators of genocide. Remove and destroy them, O Allah, especially those in Algeria, Bosnia, Kashmir and Israel so that their people can live freely like human beings in their own lands."<sup>1284</sup>

The MJC stated that it was mandatory for every Muslim to attend the Friday sermon and assembly, and advised that Muslim males be given time off work between 12h30 and 14h00, with local variations allowed, and that no monies be deducted for this religious period. In this regard, the MJC referred to Friday being considered a holiday in Muslim countries due to its religious significance.<sup>1285</sup>

Transnational issues served local political and economic interests. For example, Sh. Tafiek Najaar of the Islamic Council of South Africa (ICSA) would criticize the US, but ICSA would still issue the halaal certificates for US franchises like Kentucky Fried Chicken. The MJC allegedly made millions of rands per year, more than R3.4 million in 1996, from halaal certificate payments, and its opponents would quote the Indonesian embassy's statement that SA was the only country in the world in which much money was being made by issuing these certificates.<sup>1286</sup> In negotiations with the Muslim Unity Society in late 1993 on the formation of a united body, the MJC asked that they be the only body allowed to deal with divorce of people overseas, and wanted to have a monopoly on issuing fatwas.<sup>1287</sup>

### **Migrants and a new Muslim community**

Thousands of Muslims from Asian and African states have migrated to SA since 1994 to study, work or settle. Those from Malawi, Senegal and Somalia established themselves as communities, but migrants from North African Arab-speaking countries appeared to integrate more easily with Asian Muslims in KwaZulu Natal.<sup>1288</sup>

<sup>1283</sup> Yusuf Jacobs, chairman of the MBA, Voice of the Cape, 29 October 2000.

<sup>1284</sup> "Freedom Day, 27 April 1998", *Ad-Da'wah* No. 17 (May 1998), p. 2.

<sup>1285</sup> "Jumu'ah – The Friday Congregational Prayer", Muslim Judicial Council (undated).

<sup>1286</sup> Fu'ad Rahman, "MJC 'halaal' certificate scam", *Muslim Views*, October 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1287</sup> Achmad Cassiem, *National Chairman's report* (speech and written report), IUC annual general meeting, Athlone, 24 November 2000.

<sup>1288</sup> Suleman Dangor, "The life of the immigrant", *Muslim Views*, January/February 2001, p. 14.

Migration from the rest of Africa to the Western Cape increased significantly in the 1990s. About 98% in Cape Town were from African countries and the majority, according to Muslim organizations, were Muslim.<sup>1289</sup> Some Muslim refugees were accused of profiteering and involvement in shady property transactions. The influx also accentuated the differences between black and other Muslims at the Cape.<sup>1290</sup> Many Cape Muslims welcomed Egyptian and Moroccan Arabs but refugees from other parts of Africa were not received that well.<sup>1291</sup> Refugees were also blamed for outbreaks of disease, looting or banditry and were seen as a threat to security.<sup>1292</sup>

The main Muslim media criticized the hostile attitudes to refugees from Africa in terms of African and Islamic solidarity frameworks.<sup>1293</sup> Africa was described as the first place to give refuge to the companions of the prophet Muhammad in 615AD, when 18 of them fled Mecca to seek asylum at the court of Negus, the Christian king of Ethiopia.<sup>1294</sup>

However, in general, according to MJC administrator and later ANC official Gasant Solomons, Muslims were apathetic about the plight of Muslim refugees. ANC Minister of Social Welfare Ebrahim Rasool visited refugees at Al-Jamia mosque, but some mosques turned away Muslim refugees.<sup>1295</sup> The MJC tried to accommodate a few refugees at their premises and prefabricated houses, and the Mustadafin Foundation and Muslim Assembly provided some support. A Hanover Park warehouse was also used to accommodate many Muslim refugees.<sup>1296</sup>

Simultaneously, *Muslim Views* stated that Muslim organisations had to decide whether they merely wanted to act as welfare agencies or as pressure groups alleviating the plight of the refugees. The newspaper promoted a mobilization of Muslim organizations to act as a pressure group on government regarding the almost 9,000 refugees in Cape Town.<sup>1297</sup> A Draft Refugee Bill was circulated in 1998 and the Cape Town Refugee Forum, supported by Rasool, wanted to have clear provisions on women and socio-economic rights.<sup>1298</sup> However, as in the case of the African Renaissance discourse, most Muslims did not reconceptualize the black African Muslim migrants as part of the core local Muslim community and its institutions.

<sup>1289</sup> "The plight of refugees", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 32

<sup>1290</sup> "Unity In Diversity", *Muslim Views*, December 1994, p. 7.

<sup>1291</sup> "Appalling living conditions", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 14.

<sup>1292</sup> "The plight of refugees", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 32.

<sup>1293</sup> "Repulsing refugees – A betrayal of African tradition", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 1.

<sup>1294</sup> "Repulsing refugees", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 1 and "The plight of refugees", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 32.

<sup>1295</sup> "Refugees getting raw deal", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>1296</sup> "Plight of Muslim refugees desperate", *Muslim Views*, May 1995, p. 3; "Refugees getting raw deal", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, pp. 1, 4, "Muslim refugees", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 2 and "Appalling living conditions", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 14.

<sup>1297</sup> "Muslim refugees", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 2 and "The plight of refugees", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 32.

<sup>1298</sup> "Refugees flee from repression to hostility" and "Legislation reviewed", *Muslim Views*, July 1998, p. 14.

### **Limited authority of foreign Muslim governments**

Both the pre-1994 NP government and the new ANC government used Muslims in diplomatic roles. The Arab League decided to lift sanctions against SA in 1993, and material concerns then became the overriding driver of diplomatic relations between the SA government and Middle East, North African and Asian Muslim countries.<sup>1299</sup> In defiance of US policy and pressure, the SA government concluded agreements with Iran and SA president Nelson Mandela visited Libya in 1997.<sup>1300</sup> These steps enjoyed the support of most Muslim groups and media. However, on other issues, like arms trade with Israel and the Algerian government, both struggling against Islamist movements, the refusal of a visa to the Hamas spiritual leader Ahmed Yasin and support of Israel's jubilee celebrations, Muslim media was critical of government policy.

Among many Muslims, indifference or distrust toward the state or the ruling party prevailed. Combined with an active move into Muslim social and spiritual spheres, a move towards other Muslim governments also occurred.<sup>1301</sup> While these relations were sometimes built on economic interaction, they often also had one or more dimensions of politics and geopolitics, religious symbolism, cultural contestation, status or identity.

When the issue of participation in the 1994 elections emerged, the MJC approached the ambassadors of Muslim states to obtain their view on whether, in terms of Islam, Muslims were allowed to vote. This was a remarkable granting of interpretative and advisory power by an organization of clerics to Muslim governments, and foreign governments at that.<sup>1302</sup>

Foreign Muslim governments provided funds for charitable, religious, political and developmental purposes, but also used the local structures as proxies, for example in the case of the more Saudi Arabia-aligned MJC and the more Iran-aligned IUC. Links with these governments served to enhance status and access to the international scene, but sometimes they also became part of contestation between local groups, for example between the Saudi-supported MJC and the Iran-supported IUC.

The MJC used Muslim states elsewhere to support its local messages in support of the minority community of Muslims. For example, it advised that Muslim males be given off from work between 12h30 and 14h00 on Fridays and referred to Friday being considered a holiday in Muslim countries due to its religious significance.<sup>1303</sup> The MJC also used the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr after Ramadan and Eid-ul-Adha as religious holidays in Muslim countries to support its contention that every Muslim had the right to take off the two Eid days in view of their religious significance, without any salary being deducted.<sup>1304</sup>

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<sup>1299</sup> Yousuf Dadoo, "Relations with the Middle East and the Arab World", in Walter Carlsnaes and Marie Muller (eds.), *Change and South African External Relations* (International Thomson Publishing, 1997), pp. 174-189 on pp. 181 and 185.

<sup>1300</sup> "Go Madiba Go!", *Muslim Views*, October 1997, p. 1.

<sup>1301</sup> Lecture by Shuaib Manjra at Parliament of World Religions, 4 December 1999.

<sup>1302</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 22 March 2000.

<sup>1303</sup> "Jumu'ah – The Friday Congregational Prayer", Muslim Judicial Council (undated).

<sup>1304</sup> MJC letter to Tony Mostert, manager of Standard Bank in Salt River, dated 29 February 2000.

Foreign Muslim governments also used the opportunity to emphasize their protection of the Muslim minority. During the Mouloud festival in 1995, for example, Algeria's embassy sent a message to Muslims emphasizing its defence of Muslim minorities across the world.<sup>1305</sup> The Iranian ambassador Mahdavi, when leaving SA in 1998, reaffirmed Iran's commitment to preserving Islamic values and protecting those Muslims who were subject to massacre and torture, also in Africa.<sup>1306</sup> Such gestures were meaningful, given the historical anxieties among some Muslims about becoming a persecuted minority, and the very recent events surrounding the killings of Bosnian Muslims. They also reflected an assumption of some symbolic authority over Muslims in SA.

## Conclusion

A global consciousness formed an important part of Muslim identity in the Western Cape, and the symbolic center of Muslim identity was transnational. Among the transnational dimensions, the Middle East remained the most important. However, there was a differentiation between the mostly pro-US governments of the region and the Islamist movements, which usually received the support of most Muslim groups and media. Islam in Africa often remained an ignored or underemphasized sector. In contrast, the discourses of many Muslims centred on the Malay and Indonesian roots of many Muslims in the Western Cape and constituted a strong secondary current in 1994, losing influence thereafter.

Transnational links with the diverse and rich heritage of the Islamic world, and involvement in transnational Muslim issues, had a differential effect in the South African context. These links served to increase the status of Muslim Coloureds vis-à-vis non-Muslim Coloureds, and also allowed some Coloured Muslims to find their way into fluid and fragmented Coloured politics after 1994 by recasting and reemphasizing the transnational dimensions of Muslim identities. In the case of Asians, the transnational dimension reinforced internal divisions, especially due to the dominance of Hinduism among South African Indians, while Islam was regarded as a foreign religion of lower status by most blacks and whites.

Muslims in SA constituted a minority community in a far corner of a continent relatively removed from most industrialized countries and the center of the Islamic world. For them, identification with and participation in Muslim struggles elsewhere served as a particular bridge to the rest of the world. Already before 1994, there was an increased transnational consciousness that coincided with the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, and which also increased exposure to the works of thinkers like Muhammad Iqbal, Rida, Abdu, Qutb, Maududi and Shariati.<sup>1307</sup> This was greatly fuelled as SA's political isolation disappeared after 1994. However, the teachings of Salafi Sunni militants in the 1990s never had as much influence in the local Cape context.

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<sup>1305</sup> "Ambassador Sa'id Kitouni of Algeria on Mouloud", *Muslim Views*, August 1995, p. 14.

<sup>1306</sup> "Iranian ambassador "worried" about Cape Muslims", *Muslim Views*, October 1998, p. 6.

<sup>1307</sup> Esack, "Three Islamic strands", op. cit., pp. 479-480.

The transnational dimensions infused a wide range of religious and political activities among Muslims, including sermons, pilgrimages, radio programs and media reports, marches, demonstrations, rallies, training camps, vigilantism, political violence, lobbying and voting. They allowed for funds to be raised locally based on Islamic injunctions, for funds to be raised internationally for local purposes, for local Muslims to contribute to Muslim causes across the world and for the institution of community boycotts of local or international businesses on similar grounds. They also served to increase the status of the community, particular organisations, clerics and community and political leaders.

Transnational dimensions and struggles thus were a source of new or reinforced symbols, personal and group identities, discourses and ideas, and money and expertise. They formed part of religious and political boundary-making, allegiances, patterns of authority, legitimation and delegitimization, as well as an arena for local competition, mobilization and self-assertion. They reconstituted Muslim subjects, strengthening the transnational dimension of local Muslims as members of the global Muslim *ummah* and the Islamic world, and the reconstituted subjects, also through the new radio media, the Islamic parties and PAGAD, conducted new forms of Muslim politics in the Western Cape.

The transnational dimensions provided a potential basis for some protection by other Muslim authorities in the case where they may have been threatened in the fluidity and uncertainties of the post-1994 dispensation. The transnational dimensions also meant that the authority of the government of South Africa over Muslims was at least potentially limited and could in certain situations be overridden by considerations of loyalty to Islam or other Muslims.

Local power bases were used to try and influence the flow of events in Bosnia, Kosovo and especially Palestine in the form of propaganda, money and potential fighters, but the transnational impact of local events was negligible. In contrast, the local impact of the transnational struggles and dimensions was significant. Actors like the MJC would use their foreign links to reinforce their position. Even so, especially in the local elections of 2000, it became clear that - in general - local interests, concerns, identities and objectives were rated more important than even the symbolically and emotionally significant struggles of the Muslim world, including the Palestinian struggle.

Transnational dimensions formed an increasingly important part of Muslim identities and discourses after 1994. However, they were mediated through local actors and local struggles and reappropriated in new ways. In the encounters with the transnational sphere, in Muslim politics and even Muslim identity politics, local dynamics mostly dominated.



## Chapter 8: Islam, Muslims and symbolic orders

### Constitutional democracy

This chapter analyzes and discusses the ways in which different Muslim groups in the Cape tried to create symbolic spheres favourable to Islam and the numerical minority of Muslims. In this regard, the focus is on Muslim discourses about four issues, namely political participation in the new secular democracy, the relationship between clerical organizations and the ANC government, the status of Muslim Personal Law, and the position of Muslims and Islam in the constitutional framework.

Two new secular constitutions provided the symbolic framework of the political system in South Africa during the period 1994-2000. These were the interim constitution, Act 200 of 1993<sup>1308</sup>, which was in force from November 1993 until 8 May 1996, when a new constitution, Act 108 of 1996, later amended, was adopted.<sup>1309</sup>

Art. 4 of the 1993 constitution, like the preamble of the 1996 constitution, stated that the constitution was the supreme law of the land. The constitutions were both secular, although the preamble of the 1996 included a concessionary reference to God's protection of the land. However, both constitutions created some space for religions and for communities that constituted a numerical minority.

Art. 8 of the 1993 constitution referred to the equality of all before the law. It also prohibited unfair discrimination by the state based on ethnicity, race, culture, religion or gender, among other factors. Art. 14 also acknowledged the right to freedom of religion and recognized the possibility of a system of personal and family law adhered to by people professing a religion, and the validity of marriages concluded by adherents according to the prescriptions of a religion.

The 1996 constitution made a Bill of Rights the cornerstone of the political system. Art. 9 acknowledged the equality of all citizens and stated that the state may not unfairly discriminate against people based on race, ethnicity, culture, religion or gender. Art. 15 acknowledged the right to freedom of religion and recognized related personal and family law systems and religious marriage systems. However, it explicitly subordinated their validity to them being consistent with the constitution as a whole.

While the new political system was secular, it provided public recognition to all major religions among the population. The government did appoint Sh. Ameen Amod and Prof. Suleman Dangor to the Religious Broadcasting Panel of the SA Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), a public broadcaster. The SABC allocated 5% air-time to Islam, compared to 70% for Christianity, 5% for Hinduism, 5% for traditional African religion, 3% for Judaism and 12% for events significant to all religions.<sup>1310</sup>

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<sup>1308</sup> See the text at <http://www.constitutionalcourt.org.za/site/constitution/english-web/interim/index.html>.

<sup>1309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1310</sup> "SABC takes a step in the right direction", *Muslim Views*, February 1995, p. 7.

The MJC president was also among those reciting a prayer at the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as president in 1994, and in March 1995, parliament for the first time closed for the Islamic Eid celebrations.<sup>1311</sup> Due to the majority support for some religious values in the public domain, the secularism of the political system remained ambivalent.<sup>1312</sup>

### **Islam and politics in a minority situation**

#### *Qibla, the IUC and non-participation*

While people who were at least by background Muslim constituted almost 13% of the participants, Muslims as a group were not directly represented during the negotiations that resulted in the interim constitution. The negotiations were supported by the MJC and Call of Islam, which formed part of the ANC. However, negotiations and the eventual negotiated transfer of power were rejected by Qibla (Direction) and the Majlisul Ulama of the Eastern Cape, the latter on the grounds that the masses lacked the understanding for government and that the Western system of voting was not allowed in Islam.<sup>1313</sup>

The IUC included some conservative more traditionalist Muslims, but its leadership revolved around the Qibla leader and chairman of the IUC since 1995, imam Achmad Cassiem. While Cassiem appeared at the Western Cape launch of the PAC's election manifesto in November 1993, and was widely seen as aligned to the PAC, the IUC on 18-20 March 1994 took a resolution that Muslims could vote according to their individual conscience, while Qibla called for no vote. In contrast, in 1999, while Qibla was in favour of support to the parties to the left of the ANC, the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the IUC in May 1999 voted for a resolution stating that Muslims should not vote in the general election of 2 June 1999.<sup>1314</sup> Cassiem again questioned the value of participation before the 2000 local elections.<sup>1315</sup>

After 1994, at least in public, Cassiem supported democracy to the extent that it did not conflict with his interpretation of Islam.<sup>1316</sup> He sometimes opposed Muslim participation in the new electoral system because none of the contesting parties represented the "aspirations of the oppressed" and Muslims could not support any party which espoused only some Islamic policies.<sup>1317</sup> However, over time Qibla and the IUC vacillated between no participation in the system on grounds of principle and support for the PAC or redistributionist Black Consciousness movements as more acceptable liberation movements than the ANC.

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<sup>1311</sup> "Parliament closes for Eid", *Muslim Views*, March 1995, p. 6.

<sup>1312</sup> Bangstad, *Global flows*, op. cit.,

<sup>1313</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 209-217.

<sup>1314</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 251 fn. 4; "IUC Delegates agree Muslims should not vote", *Al-Miftah*, vol. 2 no. 6 (May/June 1999), p. 3, Husayn Laami, "IUC delegates agree Muslims should not vote", *Al-Miftah* (May/June 1999), p. 3 and Imam Ahmad Cassiem, "Editorial", *Al-Miftah*, June/July 2000, p. 6.

<sup>1315</sup> *Chairman's Address*, IUC Annual General Meeting, Athlone Technical College, 24 November 2000, p. 4.

<sup>1316</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "The Function of Islam in the South African Political Process: Defining a Community in a Nation", *Journal for the Study of Religion*, vol. 11 no. 2 (1998), pp. 15-32 on pp. 26-27.

<sup>1317</sup> Suleman Dangor, "The call of the Imam", *Muslim Views*, July 1999, p. 20.

### *Pragmatic participation*

The non-participation by a pro-Qibla group left a gap for an Islamist party in 1994. The gap was filled by two new parties, the Africa Muslim Party and the Islamic Party, which participated in the elections. Both parties rejected the secular basis of the constitutional order, but participated to change the order and to project a strong Islamic code in the political, social and economic spheres.<sup>1318</sup>

Boorhaanol Islam, a community-focused organization whose executive and symbolic leader Imam Abdurahman Bassier was close to the MJC, did not believe in a strict separation of Islam and politics either.<sup>1319</sup> Boorhaanol Islam in 1994 rejected apathy and asked for constructive action to end the unjust previous political system. However, it did not indicate a preference between three stated options, namely to unite against the elections, to vote for existing parties, or to form a front for representation within the system.<sup>1320</sup>

In 1994, Boorhaanol Islam was sceptical as to whether the central role for Islam at state ceremonies in the public sphere, compared to its previous status as a blasphemous religion, was due to recognition or political posturing. It cautioned that the call for Muslims, implicitly defined as non-black, to reach out to the black majority should not result in sacrificing the moral high ground for political expediency.<sup>1321</sup>

By 1996, however, Boorhaanol Islam clearly rejected non-participation in the system, stating that many of the contentious clauses of the Constitution could have been ameliorated by better Muslim lobbying at the time. Muslims had to try and influence the structure of society, and retreating into a spiritual laager would result in marginalisation and, ultimately, extinction.<sup>1322</sup> This shift to outright support for participation was based on a pragmatic response to events since 1994 and was also justified on that basis.

### *The MJC and principle-based participation*

Like the Muslim parties<sup>1323</sup>, the MJC did not consider Islam and politics as separate issues. During the period of white rule, an apolitical discourse periodically dominated in the MJC and among clerics. This was due to several factors, including fear of harassment and victimization, and it resulted in uneven political engagement. For example after the death in political detention of one of its members, imam Abdullah Haron, the MJC leadership did not take a clear position, but in the mid-1980s, it became an affiliate of the

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<sup>1318</sup> "Islamic Party formed," *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 2; "Election fever," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1; "Islamic Party – 'Providing a Home for Muslims'," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1; and Naushad Omar, "Islamic Party: Muslims and the elections", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 1 (1994), pp. 30-31.

<sup>1319</sup> Interview with Imam Abdurahman Bassier, Bo-Kaap, 20 November 2000.

<sup>1320</sup> "Muslims and the Elections", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 1 (1994), p. 27.

<sup>1321</sup> "The New South Africa", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 2 (1994), p. 3.

<sup>1322</sup> "Democracy vs Theocracy", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 2 (1999), pp. 2-3.

<sup>1323</sup> "Islamic Party formed," *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 2, "Election fever," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1 and "Islamic Party – 'Providing a Home for Muslims'," *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 1.

pro-ANC united Democratic Front. On a personal level, links between the top leadership of the MJC and the ANC remained close.

After 1994, the MJC clearly rejected the idea that it should be apolitical in a system governed by a secular democratic government or should accept being told by the authorities not to speak politics in the mosque.<sup>1324</sup> For Muslims in SA, according to the MJC and IUC, the Quran was still the real constitution, and Shariah the law.<sup>1325</sup> The MJC also agreed that the establishment of an Islamic government was the short-term or long-term goal of every Islamic group in order to implement Allah's commandments.<sup>1326</sup>

However, both the MJC and IUC did not directly pursue Muslim supremacy in SA. The MJC, like the IUC, stated that as a minority it was not for Muslims to impose their beliefs upon society.<sup>1327</sup> The MJC's view was that several principles applied for Muslim communities in a minority situation. These included "Necessities eliminate prohibitions" (Necessity knows no law), which was based on the Quran<sup>1328</sup>. There had to be a balance between the better and the worse, choosing the option that seemed to best serve the general interests of the people, and the principle of judging acts according to their outcomes or consequences.

The IUC's statement in 1994 that participation was prohibited forced the more influential MJC, which represented most clerics, to consider a clear position on participation. The MJC was initially divided on the issue. Some members considered the ANC as a liberatory force for all non-white groups and privately stated that it would be prohibited in Islam to vote for a party like the National Party. Others thought that the ANC would favour blacks above other groups and took into account housing and other socio-economic benefits to Coloured and Asian Muslims under the Tricameral system.

The MJC had internal debates, and also consulted ambassadors of Muslim countries, a significant indicator of how the government's political authority was conceived. As a result of the consultation, the MJC leadership concluded that it was a Quranic right to participate in a secular electoral system and vote.<sup>1329</sup> Many Muslims wanted the MJC to clearly state for whom they should vote. Eventually the MJC, like the pro-ANC Call of Islam, only stated that Muslims had to vote according to their conscience, but most Muslims voted for the NP.<sup>1330</sup>

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<sup>1324</sup> "Jumu'ah on Kosova", Muslim Judicial Council, 20 April 2000; "Jihad in question", *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1998, pp. 5 and 8.

<sup>1325</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone 23 February 2000.

<sup>1326</sup> "The participation of Muslims in a non-Islamic government", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1999, p. 9.

<sup>1327</sup> "Justice and Mercy", MJC fatwa at <http://www.mjc.org.za/Fatwas/justice%20and%20mercy.htm>, and Achmad Cassiem, *Anniversary of 16 June 1976* (video, 1991): "Not even under Islam, no matter how correct our position is, can we impose a government upon the mass of the oppressed people."

<sup>1328</sup> Quran surah 2 verse 173.

<sup>1329</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone 23 February 2000.

<sup>1330</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 22 March 2000 and Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 217-218.

In 1994, the MJC's initial hesitancy about participation seems to have been heavily influenced by theological debates, internal differences and pragmatic considerations. However, by 1999, the MJC's own choice between what it saw as imperfect options was clearly for active political participation in the political system. The links of MJC leaders to the ANC, considerations of status and patronage, and the opportunity to ensure the clerics' hegemony by staying close to the government possibly played a role in the MJC's decision to support participation. However, in public, the MJC described it as the religious duty of Muslims to participate in the establishment of a secular democratic system and forge alliances with non-Islamic groups if it was unable to establish an Islamic democratic system. In this way Muslims could deter aggression or get rid of a dictatorship, serve the interests of the Muslim *ummah*, and call other people to Islam.<sup>1331</sup>

By 1999, the new president Ebrahim Gabriels explicitly stated that one of his goals would be to facilitate Muslim participation in the political process.<sup>1332</sup> In response to the continued campaign by the IUC and PAGAD against the government and participation in government structures, the MJC restated its position in 2000, namely that the government was not illegitimate, but duly elected. It was allowed to vote or be involved in any elections in SA, and in any government structure.

According to the MJC, even though the government was secular, Muslims had to take advantage of the religious freedom enshrined in the Constitution. However, the MJC did formulate limits to cooperation and participation. If the government would promulgate anything that was against Islamic law, Muslims had a right to oppose and ignore it.<sup>1333</sup> The latter statement allowed the option of collective passive resistance, but this option was never formally considered or pursued by the MJC during the period 1994-2000.

#### *Participation to support the ANC*

Progressive Islam, a term coined by imam Rashied Omar in 1988, denoted a loose group of thinkers and activists, including Essa Moosa, Faried Esack, Rashied Omar, Abdulkader Tayob and Ebrahim Rasool. They played an active role in politically-involved Muslim organizations like the Call of Islam and the Muslim Youth Movement or the broader political United Democratic Front and African National Congress.

The praxis of the political struggle and the commitment to the UDF and ANC were the major drivers of progressive Islamic discourse, rather than the other way round. Nevertheless, the progressive discourse also included a reformist approach to Islam, including attention to gender equality and a contextual rather than an historical hermeneutics.<sup>1334</sup> While these thinkers were aligned on the side of the ANC in the political struggle, part of their focus was also on weakening the power of the traditionalist clerics and promoting a reformist trend in Islamic thinking.

<sup>1331</sup> "The participation of Muslims in a non-Islamic Government", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1999, p. 9.

<sup>1332</sup> "MJC envisages new challenges", *Muslim Views*, July 1999, p. 3.

<sup>1333</sup> "Political involvement of SA Muslims", *Ad-Da'wah*, vol. 8 no. 15 (November 2000), p. 1.

<sup>1334</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 85, 108.

Omar, a former national president of the Muslim Youth Movement, stated that politics and Islam could not be separated. Omar described the political system in SA as a secular one where all religions were welcomed in the public sphere.<sup>1335</sup> As a result of the new dispensation, Muslims were recognised as equal citizens and partners, and enhanced as citizens. Islam had also been accorded recognition and respect like never before. He therefore argued for participation by Muslims in the political process with reference to the Islamic doctrine of *maslaha* (public or practical interest), but also for participation in local elections as a means of deepening democracy at the grassroots level.<sup>1336</sup>

Rasool, then national secretary of the Call of Islam, stated in 1992 that Islamic terminology was used to conduct racial and class politics. Fear of black majority rule was converted into arguments against participation in the new political system and voting for non-believers, and fear of nationalization was expressed in terms of economic policy being Islamic or not.<sup>1337</sup> Like all the progressive thinkers, he supported participation in the electoral system in 1994, also standing for the ANC. Ten years later, in 2004, he would become the first Muslim provincial premier of South Africa.<sup>1338</sup>

Rashied Omar did not only advocate participation, he also supported the promotion of the Islamic value system within the new democracy. His view was that God expected Muslims to be agents for change. Muslims could be a leading community if they fulfilled four conditions, namely if they had a universalist view of social change, not merely being concerned about the welfare of Muslims but of all of humanity; were proactive in the promotion of wholesome goals; were vigilant concerning social evils and violations of human dignity; and truly believed in Allah.<sup>1339</sup>

Rasool, at least in the 1980s, had argued that accountability to God served to protect against the arbitrary and cynical use of Islam and the Quran to suit a particular political position. Esack argued that this served as a guide, as well as promoting introspection by the individual, and the dialectic between socio-political and personal transformation.<sup>1340</sup> All these thinkers and activists argued that Islam and Muslim interests could be served best by supporting the secular dispensation with its space for Islam and an Islam-based promotion of the interests of all, Muslim and non-Muslim, alike.

After 1994, several factors played a role in the relative marginalization of the progressive discourse in Muslim politics. The organizations and discourses of progressive Islam were developed around opposition to the state, and were allied to the major forces of the struggle. The post-1994 context exposed a limited Muslim community support for a deeply reformed local Islam after the political struggle against white rule had stopped.

<sup>1335</sup> Lecture of A. Rashied Omar at Parliament of World Religions, Cape Town, 2 December 1999.

<sup>1336</sup> A. Rashied Omar, "Response to MJC Officials Joining the Democratic Party" at <http://www.islam.org.za/Clarmont/dp.htm> dated 18 February 2000.

<sup>1337</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 216-217, 220.

<sup>1338</sup> A. Rashied Omar, "From Resistance to Reconstruction" in Benjamin F. Soares, *Muslim-Christian Encounters in Africa* (Brill: Leiden, 2006), pp. 275-292 on pp. 290-291.

<sup>1339</sup> A. Rashied Omar, "A Call for the Formation of a Muslim Parliamentary Lobby" at <http://www.islam.org.za/Claremont/lobby.htm> dated 4 February 2000.

<sup>1340</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 87-88.

Some key activists and thinkers were absorbed into ANC and state structures, while others could not make the necessary political adjustments or became disillusioned at the signs of nepotism and self-enrichment among the new elite. In addition, politics had changed and when Muslim communal politics re-emerged as an important trend, the MJC was better placed to benefit from it.<sup>1341</sup> The thinkers of progressive Islam encountered limited support for their views among most clerics, and the MJC clerics remained the dominant interpreters of Islam among most Cape Muslims. However, the work of these thinkers was prominent among Muslim leadership circles in the ANC and in non-Muslim public debates about Islam in SA and abroad.

### **Cooperation with other faith groups**

In the 1980s, the issue of Muslim cooperation with political groups like the ANC that included Communist atheists and people from Christian and Jewish communities divided the clerics and Muslims in general. These struggles from the 1980s also had some influence on the issue of participation in the elections of the new political system, often with the same protagonists on the opposing side.

In the 1980s, for example, Qibla used its opposition to such ideological cooperation to justify its choice not to join the ANC. Qibla argued that only the reformation of the Muslims as an ideological vanguard community and the undiluted presentation of Islamism would attract the oppressed masses, which would then be enlightened and overthrow the oppressors.<sup>1342</sup> In contrast, the Call of Islam, part of the pro-ANC United Democratic Front during the political struggle, even developed an acceptance of the theological legitimacy of other religions' liberatory discourses.<sup>1343</sup> The progressive thinkers continued to engage representatives of other religions on such a level, also through the participation of Rasool, Esack and Omar in the Parliament of World Religions in 1999.<sup>1344</sup>

However, according to Omar, if a political party was openly hostile to the interests of Islam and Muslims, it was not permissible for Muslims to belong to such a party.<sup>1345</sup> The interpretation of what constituted such hostility remained subjective. Before the 1994 election, for example, the concerns of non-ANC Muslims about the ANC included the number of SA Communist Party members in the list of ANC nominees.<sup>1346</sup> By 1999 and 2000, when it was clear that nationalization was not prominent on the agenda of the ANC

<sup>1341</sup> Esack, *Being*, op. cit., p. 188, Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 234-236, and lecture of A. Rashied Omar at Parliament of World Religions, Cape Town, 2 December 1999.

<sup>1342</sup> C. du P. le Roux and Iqbal Jhazbhay, "The Contemporary Path of Qibla Thought: A Hermeneutical Reflection", *Journal of Islamic Studies*, No. 12 1992, pp. 84-100 on pp. 86-92. See also J.A. Naudé, "South Africa: The Role of a Muslim Minority in a Situation of Change", *Journal Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol 13 no. 1 (January 1992), pp. 17-32 on pp. 19, 29. Exactly the same view was expressed in his *Chairman's Address*, IUC Annual General Meeting, Athlone Technical College, 24 November 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1343</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>1344</sup> Personal attendance by author.

<sup>1345</sup> A. Rashied Omar, "Response to MJC Officials Joining the Democratic Party" at <http://www.islam.org.za/Clarmont/dp.htm> dated 18 February 2000.

<sup>1346</sup> "Election poser for Muslims", *Muslim Views*, February 1994.

alliance, the concern about Communists among Muslims had disappeared or at least was not articulated.

The MJC Policy Statement included cooperation with other religious groups. It stated that its alliances and cooperation with non-Muslims would focus on common values such as freedom, justice, peace and transformation.<sup>1347</sup> While the MJC after 1994 explicitly supported cooperation with actors from other faith groups around common issues of morality and values, its cooperation with other religious groups was mostly functional rather than representing a significant engagement with the worldviews of other religions.

The MJC imposed limits on its cooperation with other religious and political groups. An alliance had to exclude provisions that would in any way undermine Islam or impose restrictions on those who sought to establish an Islamic system in a country.<sup>1348</sup> This could arguably restrict the ability of Muslims in non-Muslim parties to counter the Muslim parties, but this interpretation was never taken up by any political actor.

### **Clerics and the ANC government**

The MJC implicitly and explicitly allocated an important role for the clerics in the interpretation of Islam, rather than academics or Muslim politicians. The MJC leadership stated that career considerations, expediency and the political philosophies of parties would often influence Muslim politicians more than Islam.<sup>1349</sup>

The MJC president, Shaykh Nazeem Mohammad, was indeed close to Mandela and the ANC, which played a role in resolving issues. The MJC was recognized by the government and lobbied government.<sup>1350</sup> However, the MJC as an organization of clerics had supporters belonging to various parties in 1994. For example, while imam Gasant Solomons was an ANC supporter, some imams on the Cape Flats were pro-NP.<sup>1351</sup> Ebrahim Rasool of the ANC claimed that Sh. Shaheed Sataardien was a NP supporter, but Sataardien denied it, while Shaykh Muhammad Carloo later joined the opposition United Democratic Movement (UDM).<sup>1352</sup> The leader of the AMP also claimed in 2000 that a senior cleric in the MJC had initially been favourably disposed toward the Muslim parties in 1994.<sup>1353</sup>

The MJC leadership itself was perceived as close to the ANC. Nevertheless, it denied an alliance with any political parties and stated that as a judiciary it made its decisions based

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<sup>1347</sup> Sh. Achmat Sedick in official MJC letter headed "MJC Officials joining the DP", addressed to Mahmood Sanglay, managing editor of *Muslim Views*, 22 March 2000.

<sup>1348</sup> "The participation of Muslims in a non-Islamic Government", *Ad-Da'wah*, vol. 6 no. 6 (September 1999), p. 9.

<sup>1349</sup> "Justice and Mercy", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1997, p. 12 and "Justice and Mercy", MJC fatwa at <http://www.mjc.org.za/Fatwas/justice%20and%20mercy.htm>.

<sup>1350</sup> Interviews with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone 23 February 2000 and Ghalieb Jonker, Athlone, 24 November 2000.

<sup>1351</sup> Interview with former NNP councillor Yusuf Waggie, Mitchells Plain, 25 November 2000.

<sup>1352</sup> "Jumu'ah on Kosova", Muslim Judicial Council, 20 April 2000; "MJC Officials joining the DP", MJC letter to Mahmood Sanglay, managing editor of *Muslim Views*, dated 22 March 2000.

<sup>1353</sup> Interview with Dr. Wasfie Hassiem, Durbanville Medi-Clinic, 13 November 2000.



on the Quran, *Sunnah* and the tenets of the *Shariah*.<sup>1354</sup> The emerging new MJC leadership in the late 1990s initially tried to be non-partisan,<sup>1355</sup> although some of them personally leant towards the ANC. For example, Yagyah Adams, the public relations officer, helped Ebrahim Rasool, who was denied easy access to some congregations due to his ANC allegiance, to be invited to more mosques.<sup>1356</sup>

The MJC as a body preferred being able to maintain a working relationship with the government, but to commend or criticize the ANC and the opposition parties in terms of Islamic principles and Muslim issues, without being classified as being in a particular camp.<sup>1357</sup> During the period 1994-2000, such criticism or the taking of different policy positions from that of the ANC often occurred, mostly on issues related to Islamic morality and values, but also on Muslim community affairs and rights. These actions took the form of lobbying, memoranda, private presentations and participation in protest meetings and marches.

In 1998 an MJC delegation spoke to the ANC to determine what the ANC could do for Muslims, but it seemed to them that the ANC was taking Muslim support for granted. Three senior officials of the MJC, vice president Shaykh Shahied Esau, Imam Moutie Saban, the head of the welfare section, and Yagyah Adams, the public relations officer, joined the Democratic Party, later the Democratic Alliance (DA), before the local elections of 2000.<sup>1358</sup>

This step caused a major furore in the MJC because it interfered with the MJC leadership's strategy to maintain a close working relationship with the government and be recognized by the ANC government as the spokesman for the Muslim community. The late timing of the move to the DP indicates that while the particular clerics were unhappy with the government's position on morality in the public domain, the more immediate reason for their move was probably a view that the ANC was neglecting patronage of the Muslim community in spite of internal appeals. Thus, as their second choice, only a powerful base outside the ANC could exert effective pressure on the ANC.<sup>1359</sup>

By early 2000, the MJC secretary general, Achmat Sedick, criticized the ANC for turning from liberatory politics to party politics, focusing on political dominance and introducing many un-Islamic policies. Religious concerns and requests seemed to be allowed a hearing but were not attended to.<sup>1360</sup> Similarly, Sh. Nazeem Mohamed criticised the

<sup>1354</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 23 February 2000.

<sup>1355</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 22 March 2000.

<sup>1356</sup> Interview with Yagyah Adams, Athlone, 18 February 2000 and 11 July 2000.

<sup>1357</sup> "MJC envisages new challenges", *Muslim Views*, July 1999, p. 3 and interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 23 February 2000. This view was shared by some Muslim scholars visiting SA. "Non-Muslim political parties Islamically ineffective", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 2; "Many Muslims not Representative of the Ummah", *Muslim Views*, September 1994, p. 3.

<sup>1358</sup> "Jumu'ah on Kosova", Muslim Judicial Council, 20 April 2000; "MJC Officials joining the DP", MJC letter to Mahmood Sanglay, managing editor of *Muslim Views*, dated 22 March 2000.

<sup>1359</sup> Interviews with Yagyah Adams, Athlone, 18 February 2000 and 11 July 2000 contributed the background information, but the conclusions are those of the author.

<sup>1360</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone 23 February 2000.

subordination of Muslim Personal Law to the Constitution and the government's Anti-Terrorism Bill.

Nevertheless, Sh. Mohamed continued to have close relations with the ANC and Sh. Sedick later considered standing as an ANC candidate, but intimidation by PAGAD prevented this from happening.<sup>1361</sup> The MJC president, Ebrahim Gabriels, also took a clear stand against the DA, stating that the majority vote for the DA in local elections in December 2000 indicated that "many Muslims still feel that black people are not fit to rule the country."<sup>1362</sup>

### **Muslim Personal Law (MPL)**

#### *Gender equality and the MPL*

During negotiations, the ANC proposed that Muslim Personal Law (MPL) be recognized and that the Bill of Rights provide for it. The ANC also established an MPL task group and Dullah Omar described MPL as a priority. However, he was conscious that some Muslims also favoured recognition of the broader body of Islamic law that would give them a broader symbolic sphere of life, including Islamic criminal law and civil law.<sup>1363</sup>

MPL itself included provisions on marriage, divorce, inheritance, custody and maintenance. There were four areas of potential conflict between MPL and the equality clause in both the 1993 and 1996 constitutions. A Muslim male could marry up to four wives. A woman's rights to child custody were limited in relation to that of a man. A woman could marry Muslim males only, while a Muslim man could marry a non-Muslim woman if the children were brought up as Muslim. Men were also entitled to double the share of women in inheritance.<sup>1364</sup>

Article 14 of the 1993 constitution and Article 15 of the 1996 constitution acknowledged the right to freedom of religion. These provisions also recognized the possibility of a system of personal and family law adhered to by people professing a religion, and the validity of marriages concluded by adherents according to the prescriptions of a religion. In addition, the Cape Town Supreme Court in the case of *Ishmail v Ishmail* decided in August 1994 that Chapter 3 of the constitution prohibited discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief. Thus, Muslim marriages were not against public policy.<sup>1365</sup> However, the 1996 constitution explicitly subordinated the validity of MPL to it being consistent with the constitution as a whole, including the principle of equality and especially gender equality.

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<sup>1361</sup> Sh. Sedick was to stand as candidate 15 on the ANC's proportional representation list, but withdrew after receiving serious threats. Telephone interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, 16 November 2000.

<sup>1362</sup> "MJC appoints Shaikh Ismail Gqamane Acting President", *Muslim Views*, January/February 2001, p. 3.

<sup>1363</sup> "Dullah Omar – Our minister of Justice", *Muslim Views*, May 1994, pp. 2, 3 and 22 on pp. 3, 22.

<sup>1364</sup> Sh. Shouket Allie, "MPL within a South African Constitutional paradigm", *Muslim Views*, July 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1365</sup> "Landmark Decision on Muslim Marriages", *Muslim Views*, August 1996, p. 7.

### *Divisions over MPL*

The MJC's post-1994 vision was formulated to include the development of the Islamic way of life to the fullest in SA, which also included lobbying for the recognition of Muslim Personal Law within the secular legal system.<sup>1366</sup> When the MPL Board was inaugurated on 14 August 1994 to establish proposals about the introduction of MPL, it was initiated by a number of Muslim ANC MPs, including Fatimah Hujjaij, a Call of Islam delegate. The eight founder organizations included the MJC, ICSA, the Transvaal and Natal Jamiats, the Muslim Youth Movement, the Call of Islam and individual lawyers. The IUC refused to accept its authority, with Sh. Toffar accusing it on 16 October 1994 of being constituted in secret and excluding the IUC.<sup>1367</sup>

Gender equality became an early focal point of dissent within the Board, and even between ANC supporters on the Board. The Board held a meeting in early March 1995 when no consensus could be reached. The two main factions were the traditionalists, including most of the clerics, led by MJC president Shaykh Nazeem Mohamed. They wanted the predominance of traditional Islamic law on gender. The Muslim Youth Movement represented by the progressive assistant secretary general Ebrahim Moosa and Call of Islam, wanted the MPL to be subordinate to the Constitution with its (gender) equality clause. They enjoyed the support of some prominent Muslim provincial ANC leaders, for example Ebrahim Rasool and MPC Tasneem Essop.<sup>1368</sup>

A dispute arose at the meeting over a report submitted by the traditionalist Secretary General Shuaib Omar, in close cooperation with Mohamed, to the Constitutional Assembly. The report called for the establishment of Islamic courts or the appointment of Muslim judges of Islamic law to the existing judiciary. It was also recommended that MPL be exempt from the Constitution's Bill of Rights. Mohamed, formerly a patron of the ANC-aligned United Democratic Front in the Western Cape, also issued a decree that no women without scarves would be allowed into the meeting.<sup>1369</sup>

The progressive faction disputed the process and contents, as well as the veto of the clerics in all important matters. The demands of the progressives for greater representation of women and an end to the clerical organizations' control were not met. A few weeks after the meeting the president and secretary general unilaterally announced the dissolution of the MPL Board.<sup>1370</sup>

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<sup>1366</sup> *The Muslim Judicial Council* (pamphlet, undated).

<sup>1367</sup> "MPL Board under attack", *Muslim Views*, October 1994, p. 4. Also see Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 241-245.

<sup>1368</sup> "Coming of age in South African politics", *Muslim Views*, June 1994, p. 3.

<sup>1369</sup> "MPL Board up in smoke", *Muslim Views*, April 1995, p. 5 and Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 248-249.

<sup>1370</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 243-244; "Up close and personal law" and "The price of freedom", *Muslim Views*, July 2000, p. 23.

### *The IUC's view of MPL*

After the collapse of the MPL Board the IUC appointed its own commission of inquiry. The IUC also approached the ministry of justice to fund the commission, but without success. The aim of such a commission was to involve the broader Muslim public in MPL and assess their needs, while assessing the qualifications of the clerics.<sup>1371</sup> This effectively constituted a community-based approach to circumvent the cleric-dominated process led by the MJC, to create structures that would interact with the state, and to shift the center of the discussion from the state to the Muslim community.

The SA Law Commission (SALC) had looked at the MPL systems of various Muslim countries. The IUC's criticism of the SALC was that MPL could not be understood, implemented or legislated separately from what the IUC, in an innovative move to link the issue to the dominant SA discourse, called the "constitutional law principles of Islam".<sup>1372</sup>

The IUC stated that in Islam all dimensions of life were sacred and no distinction was drawn between the secular or political and religious components of life. The origin of MPL was in the defeat of Muslim countries and the reconstitution of Muslim law and courts by European colonial powers, which put a Western and European stamp on MPL. The reform of these legal systems by postcolonial Muslim regimes mostly occurred without proper consultation with the Muslim communities.

As a result, the IUC argued, with reference to the values of accountability and transparency as democratic values in the SA constitution, that the MPL systems of these countries could not serve as a model for MPL in SA.<sup>1373</sup> The IUC stated that the SALC had emphasized the secular dimension of the Constitution to justify its proposals, but had disregarded the democratic dimension of the Constitution. The IUC argued that "it is the democratic element which safeguards an individual and a community from the tyranny of a majority".<sup>1374</sup>

The IUC also stated that the values that informed the constitution were those of a minority, Eurocentric and carrying the baggage of capitalism, exploitation, racism, imperialism and colonialism in its legal theory and vision of a social order.<sup>1375</sup> The IUC described it as ironic that the introduction of MPL as a system of law in SA was rejected on the basis that the adherents formed a minority, while the constitution was based on a minority Eurocentric view. To support this view, the IUC stated that the interim constitution's reference to *ubuntu*, an indigenous value of human solidarity shared by the majority of South Africans, in its Postamble, was dropped.<sup>1376</sup>

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<sup>1371</sup> *The Islamic Unity Convention's Response to the South African Law Commission – Project 59: Islamic Marriages & Related Matters*, IUC, September 2000, p. 1.

<sup>1372</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>1373</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>1374</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>1375</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>1376</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

According to the IUC, while equality was important, the SALC so emphasized the right to equality and the avoidance of discrimination that it accorded no or little value to the right to human dignity, which emphasizes difference. The SALC “failed to weigh up the right to equality in relation to the right to human dignity, language and culture and the right to cultural, religious and linguistic communities, as well as the collective impact of these rights on MPL.” The demand for equality had to be balanced with “the specific recognition of difference.”<sup>1377</sup>

According to the IUC, the SALC incorporated the MPL in the SA constitutional framework without considering the Islamic constitutional law framework upon which MPL is founded, and its ethos. For example, Islamic law did not recognize that the right to freedom of religion included the right to have a matter adjudicated in a system other than Islamic law. The SALC therefore prescribed the constitutional framework within which the MPL was to operate, and imposed its ideological view on the Muslim community.<sup>1378</sup>

The IUC argued that the proposals of the SALC would mean that Muslims would have no control over their legal system. They would at best be asked to comment on an aspect thereof but within a framework established from the outside. The granting of concurrent jurisdiction on MPL to secular courts would almost inevitably undermine MPL, and their judicial powers would be increased and superior. In addition, these courts would determine both the essential and non-essential elements of a religious practice, without seeing themselves bound to follow the underlying religious principles. These rights would also be vulnerable to further curtailment through interpretation.<sup>1379</sup>

Thus, the IUC used MPL as the thin edge of a wedge to introduce Islamic law in its totality into the constitutional order.<sup>1380</sup> The IUC argued that if MPL was not introduced as a system of law, it would have several negative consequences. This state of affairs would destroy the historical continuity between the past, present and future legal history of the Muslim community in SA. The IUC implicitly held to a model that while the dominant legal systems of SA had not incorporated an Islamic legal system as such, the dominant symbolic legal order of Muslims had remained a total Islamic system over the centuries of Muslim presence in SA and was not subordinate to earthly sovereignty.<sup>1381</sup>

Polygamous marriages were often used as an example of the incompatibility of the MPL and the SA constitution. The IUC responded by stating that MPL did not distinguish between monogamous and polygamous marriage, and that this outlook should dominate discussion about Muslim marriages. It also presented three arguments based on circumstance why this should not be such an important issue, namely the very limited number of polygamous marriages, the acceptance of “such a time-honoured institution as

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<sup>1377</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>1378</sup> Ibid., pp. 3-4.

<sup>1379</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>1380</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>1381</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

the European tradition of a kept mistress or mistresses”, and the limited burden imposed on society compared to that imposed by the children of mistresses and unwed mothers.<sup>1382</sup>

According to most Islamists, Muslims may be a numerical minority of the population, but they are always the majority based on Divine Law, and in some cases they have a sense of religious and cultural superiority.<sup>1383</sup> This approach has its roots in Islamic prescriptions on the treatment of minorities, which are largely based on the Quran and early Islamic history, when Muslim conquerors were often a minority in the state they had founded.

The IUC’s approach, which excluded the possibility of subordination of Muslim Personal Law to the constitution supported by a majority, had a similar orientation. The IUC’s proposals reflected an approach to use the issue of MPL to introduce a wholly Islamic system into the constitutional order. It represented the most thorough and comprehensive Islamist response to the MPL issue. The proposals in general also represented the views of most major Muslim organizations and probably the views of most Muslims.

However, they stood little chance of being accepted by the ANC, because they could be used as a precedent by other groups with diverse value systems and thus weaken the legitimacy and control of the unitary, secular democracy. Funding for an MPL system would also have to come from the national or regional government, but other socio-economic policy objectives relating to black empowerment and development enjoyed a higher priority.<sup>1384</sup>

#### *Clerical authority over MPL*

For MPL to become law, it would have to be promulgated as ordinary legislation with a simple parliamentary majority. However, while the interim constitution insulated the religious personal and family law from a challenge on gender equality in terms of the Bill of Rights, the 1996 constitution’s section on equality removed such protection.<sup>1385</sup> MPL clashed with the constitution’s principle of equality and the constitution could only be amended by a two-thirds majority.

When the SA Law Commission brought out Issue Paper no. 15, requesting feedback before the end of August 2000, many Muslim organizations were late. The IUC did not make any submissions and called the process flawed because it excluded Sh. Toffar and

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<sup>1382</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>1383</sup> Uriah Furman, “Minorities in Contemporary Islamist Discourse”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 36 no. 4 October 2000, pp. 1-20 on pp. 2 and 3. Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit. refers to such a sense of superiority among many Muslims in SA.

<sup>1384</sup> Palmer, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

<sup>1385</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 244-245. See Art. 15 of the 1996 constitution.

other scholars and was not sufficiently accessible to women and illiterate people.<sup>1386</sup> The MYM, part of the progressive wing, focused on gender equality among Muslims.<sup>1387</sup>

The MJC eventually responded that if Muslims had to tolerate the constitutional guarantee of the rights of some Muslims to choose a system other than MPL, such tolerance should be extended to other Muslims to enable them to choose an unadulterated MPL code that included Islamic courts.<sup>1388</sup> The MJC also made a comprehensive submission to the Law Commission in response to the White Paper of the Law Commission on MPL. It stated that the legislation should afford full recognition to the role of the judicial bodies like the MJC, also through its social welfare departments, arbitration bodies and Islamic courts.<sup>1389</sup>

The MJC used its closer position to the ANC to reinforce its dominance of the community's leadership, also over MPL and on the MPL Board. However, no progress was made on MPL, with the government making full use of Muslim clerical disunity and weak organization on this issue. In the absence of Islamic courts, qualified Islamic jurists and an administrative structure, MPL continued to operate in an informal parallel system under the auspices of the MJC, ICOSA, Majlis Ashura and Muslim Assembly in the Western Cape. They had no real jurisdiction or enforcement.<sup>1390</sup> In addition, scepticism remained about whether Muslims had enough resources and skills to operate such a system.<sup>1391</sup>

At the same time, the ANC could not gain the MJC's acquiescence in a subordinate position for MPL to the constitution. This remained the case. In late April 2000 Sh. Nazeem Mohamed presented a letter to vice president Jacob Zuma setting out its concern that the constitutional infringement on the terrain of religious personal law and its subjection to the new constitutional values was obstructing a system that balanced the diverse group and religious values, cultures and interests.<sup>1392</sup> Thus, while the MJC was unable to achieve the institutionalization of MPL on its terms, it also did not concede supreme authority to the South African executive, legislative, judiciary or constitution on this issue.

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<sup>1386</sup> Sh. Shouket Allie, "'Ulama in MPL dilemma", *Muslim Views*, August 2000, p. 3 and "Muslims respond to Law Commission's MPL proposals", *Muslim Views*, September 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1387</sup> "Muslims respond to Law Commission's MPL proposals", *Muslim Views*, September 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1388</sup> "MJC submits proposals on Islamic marriages", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 2000, p. 5.

<sup>1389</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>1390</sup> Eshaan Palmer, "Muslim Personal Law: An update", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 2 (1994), pp. 17-22 on pp. 18-19.

<sup>1391</sup> Interview with Sh. Shouket Allie, Masjidul Quds, 4 October 2000.

<sup>1392</sup> "Ulama address Muslim concerns to Zuma", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 2000, p. 7.

## Constitutional democracy and an Islamic state

### *The MJC's three-pronged approach*

For Muslims in SA, according to the MJC, the Quran was still the real constitution and *Shariah* the law.<sup>1393</sup> The MJC also stated that the establishment of an Islamic government was the short-term or long-term goal of every Islamic group in order to implement Allah's commandments.<sup>1394</sup> However, the MJC did not directly pursue Muslim supremacy in SA. The MJC stated that "it is not for us (Muslims) to impose our beliefs upon a society that has its own method of developing and shaping its laws".<sup>1395</sup>

In 2000, the MJC secretary general considered an Islamic state not possible "at this stage", because of Muslims constituting a numerical minority. However, he considered a Muslim president appointing his own people still possible. In his view, the search for meaning and knowledge would continue and an Islamic order in future was still possible.<sup>1396</sup> A delegation of 20 clerics from the UUCSA led by the MJC president Mohamed spoke to Mandela on 22 April 1998, asking that the government "have a serious look at the moral value system of Islam in order to incorporate these into the Bill of Rights and the Constitution of the country."<sup>1397</sup>

The MJC's view was that even in a non-Muslim government, power-sharing was necessary for social order. This power-sharing would not necessarily be based on Islamic law, but had to be based on an important component of Islamic rule, namely *shura* or the authority of the *ummah* or Muslim community. This would prevent dictatorship, anarchy or foreign domination and could also be used to achieve independence, social solidarity, development, civil liberties, human rights, political pluralism, freedom of the press and liberty for mosques and Islamic activities.<sup>1398</sup>

The MJC leadership therefore in effect used a three-pronged approach to counter the secular constitution as part of a minority community within the parameters of the political system. This approach was probably less the result of a fixed strategy since 1994 than an evolving approach that emerged in the course of the period 1994-2000 as a result of interactions with allied and opposing Muslim groups and the ANC, as well as internal clerical debates.

First, the MJC acknowledged that the Quran was the real constitution of Muslims, *Shariah* the main source of law and an Islamic government at least a long-term goal. Second, while it did not directly promote the political alternative of an Islamic state, it did not concede the supremacy of the constitution or any SA political institution over MPL. Third, it used an Islamic doctrine about consultation with the Muslim community, linked to the constitutional emphasis on democracy and widespread traditionalist views

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<sup>1393</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone 23 February 2000.

<sup>1394</sup> "The participation of Muslims in a non-Islamic government", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1999, p. 9.

<sup>1395</sup> "Justice and Mercy", MJC fatwa at <http://www.mjc.org.za/Fatwas/justice%20and%20mercy.htm>.

<sup>1396</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone 23 February 2000.

<sup>1397</sup> "Meeting between president Mandela & UUCSA – 22 April 1998", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 1998, p. 2.

<sup>1398</sup> "The participation of Muslims in a non-Islamic Government", *Ad-Da'wah*, September 1999, p. 9.



among Muslims and most South Africans, to deny the legitimacy of secularism and parts of the Bill of Rights.

### *The IUC's Islamist framework*

The IUC saw MPL as only one part of an Islamic framework of law and values that should inform the constitutional order in which even a numerical minority of Muslims live. The Constitution Ad Hoc Committee of the IUC, which competed with the MJC for leadership of the community, also submitted a document with its comments on the draft constitution on 20 February 1996. The IUC document constituted a comprehensive framework that tried to insert an Islamic but also an Islamist dimension into the constitution.

Copies of an executive summary of the IUC document were sent to all parliamentarians, ministers and President Nelson Mandela. A submission was made to the Constitutional Assembly on 19 March. On 21 March a mass meeting was held in Cape Town to discuss the executive summary, at which imam Cassiem delivered a paper "What's right about the Bill of Rights?"<sup>1399</sup>

The 1993 constitution did not contain a preamble, and while the 1996 constitution had a preamble referring to God protecting the land, both constitutions stated that the constitution was the supreme law. However, the IUC's submission inserted a preamble as part of the constitution that declared as follows: "The republic of South Africa's Constitution declares the sovereignty of God over the affairs of all people. Mindful of the commitment to a religious way of life by the majority of the people; and mindful of the commitment of the people to democracy, equity, freedom, justice and peace, the people resolve to establish open, transparent, honest and democratic government."<sup>1400</sup>

The IUC preamble established God, not the people as the source of sovereignty. Similarly, while the draft constitution stated that legislative authority is vested in Parliament, Article 40(1) stated that 'the legislative authority of mankind is vested in the Creator. Parliament may make laws for the Republic in terms of the Constitution, which laws must be evaluated against the criterion of the laws of the Creator.'<sup>1401</sup>

This would remain the IUC's position, and the view of Qibla and PAGAD.<sup>1402</sup> The position was in line with mainstream Islamist thinking elsewhere. However, in general it also reflected the view of the MJC leadership, Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties. The progressive thinkers tended to consider the people a sufficient source of sovereignty.

The preamble of the IUC's submission also inserted a claim that the majority of people are committed to a religious way of life as a fixed feature of the basis of the constitution.

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<sup>1399</sup> "Chronological Chart of Major Events", *Al-Miftah* (May/June 1998), p. 10.

<sup>1400</sup> "Annexure IUC 2", *Comments & Proposed Amendments to the Working Draft of the Constitution, Islamic Unity Conference*, p. 1.

<sup>1401</sup> "Annexure IUC 3", *Comments*, op. cit., p. 15.

<sup>1402</sup> "Chairman's address", *Al-Miftah*, May/June 1999, pp. 7, 15 and Abdussalaam Ebrahim, "Keynote Address", PAGAD National Conference, 7-8 August 1999.

The preamble also stated that the establishment of a particular kind of democracy at least partly followed with this commitment in mind. In two ways then, the preamble grounded the new constitution and democracy on a religious foundation, not a secular one.

In the SA context, this form of Islamism provided a means of denying the symbolic authority of the new political elite, whose access to power, status and resources rested on the discourses of secular democracy. The submission justified this Islamist approach also in terms of the dominant discourse of democracy, which addressed the actual increase in elite politics and centralization of power under Mbeki. It also legitimized the possible creation of an Islamic symbolic sphere and concomitant Muslim political and economic structures.

The submission therefore provided an alternative symbolic sphere to the majoritarian discourse based on numbers only, which disadvantaged a numerical minority of mostly non-black Muslims, yet tried to create a space for the Muslim community within the new symbolic order. In effect, such a symbolic sphere would also constitute an alternative to the framework of an unfettered flow of goods and services and consumerist values that reinforced the dominant alliance between the ANC leadership and corporate business.

### **Islam and human rights**

The IUC submission engaged the dominant human rights discourse of the constitution and tried to insert Islamic limits and aspects. The three areas of amendments, God's sovereignty over all affairs, the vesting of legislative authority in the Creator, and the interpretation of the Bill of Rights subject to Basic Human Morality, were the first item of the IUC's summary of its submission. They were the first item and covered under the heading 'Sovereignty', reflecting the core importance attached to these changes.<sup>1403</sup>

Art. 35(1) inserted Islamic values by stating that the rights in the Bill of Rights may be limited only to the extent that the limitation is 'not a breach of Basic Human Morality as practised in an open and democratic society based on freedom, equity and justice.'<sup>1404</sup> Art. 39(3) finally stipulated a supreme position for Islamic values by stating that when interpreting any legislation and when developing the common law, every court must promote the spirit, purport, and objects of the Bill of Rights (inserted) subject to Basic Human Morality.'<sup>1405</sup>

Basic Human Morality was explained in the Summary as follows: 'The suggested criteria for the limitation of this right (freedom of expression) is "basic human morality". The religious view of the majority of South Africans must be taken into account. Islam and other religions are opposed to prostitution, homosexuality, abortion, pornography, lesbianism, bestiality, paedophilia and any other form of lewdness. Blasphemy of God Almighty (The Supreme Being) and the Prophets of all religions MUST NOT BE protected by the right to freedom of expression.'

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<sup>1403</sup> *Summary of the IUC's Submission to the Constitutional Assembly*, IUC, undated.

<sup>1404</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, p. 12.

<sup>1405</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, p. 15.

Several injunctions reflecting Islamic values were derived from the primary principle of a limit to the Bill of Rights based on Basic (Islamic) Human Morality. These injunctions, if implemented, would have excluded several rights extended in the Bill of Rights. New provisions against destroying any human conception prohibited the right to abortion or even genetic research (Art. 11.4) and infringed upon the rights in the Bill of homosexuals and prostitutes. One amendment to the right to privacy in Article 13 included the right not 'to have his or her modesty violated', which was related to Islamic dress prescriptions.

Art. 15(1) also added a condition to the right to freedom of expression 'provided it is in accordance with the Basic Human Morality of Society.' Article 15(2) explicitly added exceptions to the basic right, including 'advocacy of hatred based on race, ethnicity, religion, nationality or tribalism that constitutes incitement to discrimination', as well as 'Blasphemy of God Almighty (the Supreme being) and the Prophets of all religions in Society.'<sup>1406</sup>

Art. 29 described academic freedom as a right that 'should form part of the right to freedom of religion, belief and opinion and should only apply to individuals, not to institutions.' When implemented, these stipulations would have served to constrain criticism or denial of many tenets of Islam, also in educational curricula.<sup>1407</sup>

#### *The state as dispenser of (im)morality*

According to Dullah Omar of the ANC, there never had to be a situation where Muslims were forced to adopt standards that conflict with their values.<sup>1408</sup> At the same time, Omar reiterated that one of the virtues of the constitution was that it granted all religions legal space to exist. The state was not the dispenser of morality, the constitution allowed but did not encourage anti-Islamic practices, and communities needed to take effective steps to instil morality in society.<sup>1409</sup>

Other pro-ANC Muslims, especially thinkers from the circle of Progressive Islam, such as Ebrahim Rasool, Faried Esack and Rashied Omar, emphasized that Islam in the context of the SA of the time meant that justice and the transformation of society should become the yardstick for adherence to Islam.<sup>1410</sup> On these issues at least, they were implicitly seeing the state as a dispenser of Islamic morality as well, and this focus on socio-economic issues and values became their main defence to efforts accusing the ANC of not inhibiting socio-cultural ills.

In 1996, Omar stated that political change had not automatically brought about a new morality, and that this was the major lesson learnt in the previous two years. However,

<sup>1406</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments* op. cit., pp. 4-5.

<sup>1407</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments* op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>1408</sup> "Dullah Omar – Our minister of Justice", *Muslim Views*, May 1994, pp. 2, 3 and 22 on pp. 3, 22.

<sup>1409</sup> "On the role of religion", *Muslim Views*, October 1996, p. 4.

<sup>1410</sup> "Political Courtship of Muslims intensifies", *Muslim Views*, March 1994, p. 5; A.K. Tayob, "The elections are A-Coming", *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 27; "Rasool calls on Muslims not to belie Islamic code", *Muslim Views*, September 1996, p. 8.

while he did not consider the state as a dispenser of morality, many Muslims, including the MJC, started to see the government as a dispenser of immorality if it did not curtail what it saw as socio-cultural ills.

The MJC, *Boorhaanol Islam*, *Muslim Views* and the Muslim parties opposed the constitution's creation of public space for homosexuality, abortion, gambling, pornography and prostitution. The MJC based its criticism on Islamic values, but also used the widespread similar conservative attitudes among South Africans as justification, criticising the nature of the democracy if the government did not take into account the population's views.<sup>1411</sup>

The MJC openly opposed the constitution's provision for gay rights, and open media displays of support in 1994.<sup>1412</sup> It launched campaigns against casinos and joined hundreds of marchers in April 1997 against legislation legalizing pornography, demanding a referendum.<sup>1413</sup> By 2000, the MJC still held the government responsible for allowing shebeens, casinos and brothels to be established.<sup>1414</sup>

In 1998, the MJC campaigned for a complete ban on the production, use, distribution and trade of liquor, since it was forbidden in Islam and the ban would eradicate many of the socio-economic evils in society. The MJC also stated that no Muslim may serve on liquor-related authorities or be employed or receive donations from organisations in the liquor industry. Since agriculture and services in the Western Cape were closely linked to the wine sector, this could have had potential economic repercussions. The MJC accused the government of only being concerned about tax revenue from this sector, with little regard for the erosive effect on moral and spiritual systems of SA.<sup>1415</sup>

The MJC also campaigned against what it called "hijabuphobia". It linked the resistance to allowing Islamic female dress to the issue of gender equality, but also to an increase in rape and prostitution, and saw it as a subversion of Islam under the guise of democracy.<sup>1416</sup> In 1998, the MJC made representations to the president and the relevant state departments to allow Muslim females to wear scarves or other headdress when taking photos for identity documents, and complained about Islam being painted as a narrow, impractical, chauvinistic and outdated system in this regard. The issue was eventually resolved at provincial level.<sup>1417</sup>

There was some basis to claims by the MJC that most South Africans adhered to conservative moral values. A Human Sciences Research Council survey released on 8

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<sup>1411</sup> "An open letter to Government", *Ad-Da'wah*, April 2000, p. 2.

<sup>1412</sup> "Democracy v Freedom of...?", *Muslim Views*, July 1994, p. 4.

<sup>1413</sup> "MJC against pornography legislation", *Muslim Views*, April 1995, p. 4 and "Serious onslaught against deen", *Muslim Views*, April 1997, p. 4.

<sup>1414</sup> "An open letter to Government", *Ad-Da'wah*, April 2000, p. 2.

<sup>1415</sup> "Opposing the Liquor Bill", *Ad-Da'wah*, October 1997, p. 1.

<sup>1416</sup> "Casinos & their impact on society", *Ad-Da'wah*, June 1998, p. 2.

<sup>1417</sup> "Hijabuphobia", *Ad-Da'wah*, June 1998, p. 2 and "Muslim women-headgear for the photo of the driver's licence resolved", *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1998, p. 2 and "Since when do I need a certificate to wear a scarf?", *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1998, p. 3.

February 1996 stated that 78,7% of even ANC voters opposed the legalisation of abortion and 73,9% were against allowing sexually explicit scenes in films.<sup>1418</sup> In 1994 and 1999, most political opposition parties, including the DP, NNP, IFP and PAC, claimed that their programs represented many Islamic values.<sup>1419</sup> They were also against abortion on demand, except the DP, which allowed a free vote to its representatives on the death penalty and abortion. Perhaps even more significantly, all of them were in favour of Muslim women being able to wear headgear in schools and at work and of the legalisation of Muslim marriages.<sup>1420</sup>

Some Muslims in the ANC encouraged Muslims to support the ANC but maintain their independent judgment. Dullah Omar, transport minister at the time, advocated retaining an independent judgment on foreign policy, since government sometimes did something right and sometimes erred.<sup>1421</sup> Omar also saw cultural organizations like Bazme Adab, an Urdu literary society, as watchdogs on the legislature, but in terms of promoting efficiency and anti-poverty, rather than in terms of communal politics.<sup>1422</sup>

While the MJC maintained its focus on Islam and Muslims, it did not pursue a separatist vision of Muslims as a community. It aimed at gaining recognition and respect from all South Africans for Islam and a united but multicultural South Africa where all communities and cultures exist in peace and harmony. To this end, the MJC supported the propagation of Islamic values to build a morally conscious broader society.<sup>1423</sup>

#### *Clerics, Islamic law and the death penalty*

De Klerk placed a moratorium on the death penalty in 1992. In May 1995, when Dullah Omar was minister of justice, the Constitutional Court, including judge Ismail Mahomed, scrapped the death penalty as being unconstitutional. The ground was that it conflicted with sections of the Constitution on the protection of life and the dignity of human life. However, many Muslim organizations, including the MJC and IUC, supported the death penalty as being in accordance with Islamic law.<sup>1424</sup>

The view of the MJC was that while Muslims were not large enough in numbers to impose their beliefs upon the broader society, this did not for example prevent it from lobbying for the reinstitution of the Islamically-ordained death penalty.<sup>1425</sup> Already in March 1995, the MJC leadership participated in a march to parliament to demand that the death penalty not be scrapped. "The Quran calls on Muslims to act with impunity when dealing with murderers and other villains", Sh. Gabriels stated.<sup>1426</sup>

<sup>1418</sup> Fu'ad Rahman, "The New Constitution – at what price?", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, p. 4.

<sup>1419</sup> A.K. Tayob, "The elections are A-Coming", *Muslim Views*, February 1994, p. 27.

<sup>1420</sup> "Election '99", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 2 (1999), pp. 39-45.

<sup>1421</sup> "SA Muslims can aid Palestinian struggle – Dullah Omar", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 2000, p. 8.

<sup>1422</sup> "Apartheid legacy still with us", *Muslim Views*, July 1994, p. 1.

<sup>1423</sup> *The Muslim Judicial Council* (pamphlet, undated).

<sup>1424</sup> Esack, *Quran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., p. 230.

<sup>1425</sup> "Justice and Mercy", MJC fatwa at <http://www.mjc.org.za/Fatwas/justice%20and%20mercy.htm>.

<sup>1426</sup> "Muslims call for death penalty to remain", *Muslim Views*, March 1995, p. 1.

On 24 June 1997, Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels of the MJC met President Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg, and delivered two papers expressing concern about the breakdown of moral fabric in SA. The first paper covered abortion by minors and a restriction on the rights of parents to intervene, and the second covered pornography, crime and concern about the abolition of the death penalty.<sup>1427</sup>

The death penalty also lent itself as an issue on which Muslims could reach out beyond their community and act as a pressure lobby. After PAGAD and its mass rallies and marches came to prominence, the MJC stated that it favoured mass mobilization of the public to put pressure on the government and law enforcement agencies rather than vigilantism.<sup>1428</sup> In 1998, Sh. Gabriels stated that any political party that wanted Muslim support had to have the death penalty first on its list of priorities, to be used for those found guilty of serious offenses like murder, rape, armed robbery and kidnapping.<sup>1429</sup>

While the emergence of PAGAD maintained pressure on the MJC to take a strong stand on this issue, its first actions preceded those of PAGAD and reflected a shared concern among the MJC leadership and its followers. The death penalty issue also allowed the clerics to assert their role as custodians of Islamic law and its main interpreters. Due to the context where many Muslims and others were daily exposed to the threat of serious violence and crime, and the perception that it would serve to restore justice and serve as a deterrent, the death penalty also provided an issue around which the divided Muslim community could unite and the clerics could provide community leadership.

Muslims in the ANC who opposed the death penalty used two political arguments against it. Esack stated that the Islamic personal moral code was linked to a comprehensive Islamic worldview and to transplant the rules from a wider context into a non-Islamic society would reduce an entire worldview into a set of punishments bereft of the underlying human and compassionate ethos of the injunctions. Muslims could not really expect a government representing all the people of SA to implement laws peculiar to Muslims.<sup>1430</sup>

In contrast, Dullah Omar stated that the penalty was permissible in Islamic law. However, in the context of the broader system of justice, capital punishment had become an unjust political issue. More than 400 people were waiting to be hanged, and most of them were blacks.<sup>1431</sup>

However, the death penalty enjoyed overwhelming support as an anti-crime measure among Muslims and non-Muslims, including most blacks and even most ANC members. A Markinor survey in 1995 found that 62% of the population favoured the retention of the death penalty and a Human Sciences Research Council survey in July 1997 found that 71.4% favoured such a penalty. A majority of ANC members also favoured the death

<sup>1427</sup> "Religion in the New South Africa", *Ad-Da'wah*, August 1997, p. 1.

<sup>1428</sup> "Khutbah focus – The only alternative", *Ad-Da'wah*, November 1997, p. 11.

<sup>1429</sup> "The death penalty", *Ad-Da'wah*, June 1998, p. 1.

<sup>1430</sup> Esack, *Being*, op.cit., pp. 166-167, 178-179.

<sup>1431</sup> "Capital punishment", *Muslim Views*, March 1995, p. 6 and "Death penalty declared unconstitutional", *Muslim Views*, June 1995, p. 1.

penalty.<sup>1432</sup> By 1998, 76% of black people and 98% of whites wanted a return of the death penalty.<sup>1433</sup> All the main opposition parties, the DP, NNP, FF, IFP and PAC, also supported the death penalty. The AMP opposed the perceived leniency in punishment for major crimes and stood for Islamic morals and the recognition of Islamic law and capital punishment.

On 27 April 1998, Freedom Day, in a prayer on behalf of the Muslim community in Cape Town, Sh. Achmat Sedick of the MJC prayed that the rulers would rule according to Allah's divine and moral injunctions, which would lead to economic prosperity and social harmony, because immorality bred poverty and poverty crime.<sup>1434</sup> "Whilst the evil and immoral opportunities are presented as alternatives for problems, people will naturally resort to those instead of adhering to intrinsic values and morals, and instead of being inflexible on the Bill of Rights, the government should understand this and give the people what they desire, a return to the death penalty."<sup>1435</sup>

Ironically, however, many in the MJC leadership would mostly remain close to the ANC. Thus, the MJC leadership's campaign for the return of the death penalty partly constituted a form of internal contestation within the broader ANC alliance, as well as an attempt to restructure the broader symbolic field. The death penalty became an issue to indicate the limited legitimacy or the deficient policies of the government in two ways, namely that it did not protect the population sufficiently, and that it did not reflect the demands of most of the population. This attempt also included a linkage to a broader Islamic criticism of the constitutional order. The MJC linked the greater toleration of shebeens, casinos and brothels under the new constitution, immorality and no sacred order as a cause of poverty and crime, and the need for the death penalty.

#### *PAGAD and communal rule enforcement*

The dominant view among Muslims and structures like the MJC, IUC, *Boorhaanol Islam* and Muslim parties during most of the period 1994-2000 was that Muslim ANC MPs and cabinet ministers were not strongly resisting or opposing legislation on gambling, prostitution, pornography, gay rights and abortion.<sup>1436</sup> Under the leadership of Abdussalaam Ebrahim, PAGAD went one step further and turned the fight against gangsterism into a fight against a government that allowed drugs, gangsterism and other perceived vices to flourish under its new constitution, while being too corrupt to fight

<sup>1432</sup> [http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Media\\_Release-1.phtml](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Media_Release-1.phtml).

<sup>1433</sup> "Blacks also want the noose back", *The Sunday Independent*, 1 January 1998, p. 9.

<sup>1434</sup> "Freedom Day 27 April 1998", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 1998, p. 2.

<sup>1435</sup> "An open letter to Government", *Ad-Da'wah*, April 2000, p. 2.

<sup>1436</sup> "Gambling and pornography", *Muslim Views*, May 1995, p. 8; "The new constitution – at what price?", *Muslim Views*, May 1996, pp. 4-5 and "Declaring war on casinos", *Ad-Da'wah*, July 1998, p. 1.

against crime. Islamic and local themes were mixed.<sup>1437</sup> PAGAD described the status quo as “evil” and delegitimized the “Satanist” government’s authority.<sup>1438</sup>

The IUC submission also created a legitimate basis for Muslim community defence, one of the justifications used by PAGAD. Art.11(5) was inserted and stated: ‘Every citizen has the right to self-defence.’ The Summary explained this as follows: “In a community wracked by political violence and crime, it becomes imperative to realize the importance of the right to self-defence.”<sup>1439</sup>

While the MJC deplored PAGAD’s turn to violent politics, its leadership acknowledged the need for an organization of community pressure on these issues, since PAGAD did have an effect.<sup>1440</sup> The MJC supported the mobilization of neighbourhood watches and patrols, with MJC-aligned clerics playing leading roles in such groups in Surrey Estate and the Bo-Kaap. However, while PAGAD continued to use community measures to enforce order and rules, the MJC emphasized the *Shariah*’s prohibition on substituting the ruler’s law enforcement system by vigilantism, instead calling for mass community pressure against the authorities to improve law enforcement against gangsters and druglords.<sup>1441</sup>

The prevalence of violent crime and various socio-economic ills, as well as the emergence and prominence of PAGAD, were dislocationary events. The dominant discourse of the Rainbow Nation and human rights no longer sufficed. There was a widespread feeling that the existing institutions and explanations were incapable of assessing events appropriately or of instituting appropriate measures. Muslim popular confidence in the protective ability of the state dropped, sometimes close to the point of a legitimacy crisis, and there was widespread popular support for the return of the death penalty and community protection measures. This allowed more space to promote various Islam- and community-focused alternatives among Muslims, which formed part of an intense contestation over community leadership and the symbolic capital of Islam.<sup>1</sup>

### The gender issue

Gender issues were one of the boundary concerns involving the Islamic symbolic order maintained and recreated by clerics. The roles of women also formed an important part of family units and processes, which in turn, according to the discourses of the MJC, IUC

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<sup>1437</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “PAGAD National Conference starting today (21-23 March)”, *Muslim Views*, March/April 1997, p. 3 and unmarked speech by Ebrahim, State Docket, pp. 912-920 on p. 918. See the PAGAD website for variations on this theme at <http://www.PAGAD.co.za>.

<sup>1438</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “PAGAD National Conference starting today (21-23 March)”, *Muslim Views*, March/April 1997, p. 3. See also chapter 5.

<sup>1439</sup> *Summary of the IUC’s Submission to the Constitutional Assembly*, undated.

<sup>1440</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 23 February 2000.

<sup>1441</sup> “Khutbah focus – The only alternative”, *Ad-Da’wah*, November 1997, p. 11 and interview with imam Ishmail Davids, Bo-Kaap, 15 November 2000.



and others, were considered important in the formation and maintenance of a Muslim community.<sup>1442</sup>

After 1994, the dominant ANC discourse emphasized gender equality. In the context of affirmative action employment policies that put pressure on some Coloured and Asian men, as well as perceptions of increased threats to Muslim families in the more permissive environment, the discourse on gender equality was seen as another challenge to the role of clerics and men, and to traditional family structures.

As discussed above, gender equality caused a split in the MPL Board in early 1995 from which it did not recover very quickly. An incident later in 1995 further indicated the deep divisions on this issue. On 14 August 1994, US professor Amina Wadid Muhsin delivered a pre-*jumuah* lecture at Claremont Main Road Mosque from the main floor of the mosque, the first time that a woman was allowed to do so in SA, and in spite of pamphlets that the lecture would take place from the women's section.<sup>1443</sup> Wadud's address on 16 August at the Sunday Forum of the Masjidul Quds mosque was disrupted by about 300 men and women hurling abuse.

In spite of the ANC's prominent support for equal rights for women, the ANC-leaning leadership of the MJC opposed the event of 14 August. Nazeem Mohamed, the MJC president, denounced it on the MJC-aligned Voice of the Cape radio station. While ANC Minister of Health Ebrahim Rasool gave his support to a continuation of the process to give voice to the experience of women,<sup>1444</sup> two Muslim ANC MPs also opposed the innovation relating to women in the mosque.<sup>1445</sup>

The so-called Claremont Main Road Steering Committee was formed on 27 October 1994, after the August 1994 incident. It was allegedly formed to claim their right as members of the Claremont community to whom the mosque endowment (*waqf*) was made in terms of a donor's title deed of 1854. It also called for the resignation of Imam Omar and argued that according to Islam, when a leader no longer acts in the best interest of Islam and no longer enjoys the support of the Muslim community, Islamic tradition requires his resignation.<sup>1446</sup>

In February 1995, during Ramadaan, a crowd of a few hundred people demanding entry to the next general meeting of the Claremont Main Road mosque, tried to depose the imam and mosque committee. The Committee, and the Forum of Muslim Theologians, claimed to have organized attendance at the Annual General Meeting. However, both these groups turned out to be short-lived and it is feasible that the MJC was a major driving force behind them. The MJC denied that they were involved, but Sh. Nazeem

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<sup>1442</sup> "Islam and the structure of the family" and "How to preserve the Muslim family", *Ad-Da'wah*, August 1999, p. 10.

<sup>1443</sup> "Masjid Sanctity Desecrated – say local Ulema", *Muslim Views*, August 1994, p. 1.

<sup>1444</sup> "Visiting academic stirs hornets' nest", *Muslim Views*, August 1994, p. 3.

<sup>1445</sup> Abdulkader Tayob, "Islam in South Africa: Mosques, Imams and Sermons" (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), pp. 40-42 and Esack, *Qu'ran, Liberation and Pluralism*, op. cit., pp. 246-248 and 253.

<sup>1446</sup> "Claremont – the other side", *Muslim Views*, March 1995, p. 5.

Mohamed did comment that the MJC was upset that women mingled with men at the mosque.<sup>1447</sup>

Gender equality constituted one issue of difference between supporters of the ANC aligned to the MJC, with most of the MJC leadership effectively forming part of a counter-current to the main discourse on gender equality inside the ANC. It also formed a major issue around which progressive thinkers and many clerics in the Cape and northern provinces competed for control of the symbolic capital of Islam in the Cape and in SA.

The IUC held a similar view to the MJC on the role of women. It maintained that equality and equity had been conflated. Equity was defined to include the full enjoyment of all rights and freedoms and obligations.” The Commission for Gender Equality’s name was changed to that of Commission for Gender Equity, a shift reflecting a different Islamic view of women and their role in the home and in public.<sup>1448</sup>

### **The IUC and a transformed state**

The draft constitution’s article 1 stated that the RSA was one state founded on a commitment to achieve equality and to protect and promote human dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms.<sup>1449</sup> The proposal accepted the RSA as one state, not inserting any change that would create space for an Islamic geographical sphere, as promoted by Boorhaanol Islam, or a greater power to the provinces, as promoted by the Muslim parties.

The draft constitution also added a transformational, possibly revolutionary element in article 1 that focused on a core concept in IUC discourse, namely justice. This was done by adding, as indicated by the parts in bold below, that the RSA was founded on the commitment “**to enhance fundamental human rights and freedoms in order to achieve justice.**”<sup>1450</sup> The focus on justice reflected Cassiem’s views on a redistribution of power and wealth in SA, but also globally. In the political context, it also reflected the dissatisfaction with the negotiated transfer of power between the NP and the ANC.

Article 19 was amended to read ‘No indigenous citizen may be deprived of citizenship.’<sup>1451</sup> This allowed for the removal of citizenship from those who could be redefined as non-indigenous, including whites. Strictly speaking, all Muslims without brown or black ancestry would be included too, but the IUC’s interpretation was that they, being previously ruled by whites, formed part of the oppressed black i.e. indigenous population. The IUC submission thus envisaged a new system disempowering ‘non-indigenous’ groups, and a redistributive system. In the SA context, this could be used to dismantle the sources of power, wealth and status of the Afrikaners and English-speaking whites.

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<sup>1447</sup> “MJC members bust Claremont Mosque AGM”, *Muslim Views*, February 1995, p. 3.

<sup>1448</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 33.

<sup>1449</sup> Annexure IUC 2, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>1450</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1451</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 5.

The IUC's submission also reflected attention to the public accountability and limitation of parliament and political parties, and attention to the rights of political prisoners in Art. 18(4), 23(2) and 34.<sup>1452</sup> Another amendment reflected the IUC and imam Cassiem's distrust of the state apparatus, with a stipulation about the right 'not to be spied upon.'<sup>1453</sup> A similar concern about political prisoners and their rights was also reflected in *Al-Miftah*.<sup>1454</sup>

The MJC leadership did not openly demonstrate a similar distrust of the state apparatus in 1994 or 1995, probably because of the emphasis on civil liberties and human rights in the main public discourses and because it considered itself close enough to the new government. However, in internal debates, there was some apprehension among clerics, also clerics aligned to the MJC, and within Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties, about the eventual nature of a new government.

In April 2000, the president of the United Ulama Council of SA, Nazeem Mohamed, presented a letter to vice president Jacob Zuma, which set out its concern about Islamophobia in the media and security forces, and called for the retraction of the Anti-Terrorism Bill of 2000 before parliament.<sup>1455</sup> Reasons for UUCSA's opposition included that the legislation would make it a crime for Muslims to support charitable and religious activities of organizations classified as terrorist; Muslim personalities defined as terrorist might be barred from speaking at mosques; the integrity of Muslim schools perceived to be closely associated with "Islamic fundamentalism" would be undermined; and the bill was likely to inhibit perfectly legitimate Islamic utterances from the pulpit.<sup>1456</sup>

Sh. Achmat Sedick also had a short conversation with justice minister Penuell Maduna and law and order minister Steve Tshwete on the Anti-Terrorism Bill. They assured him that the Bill was not aimed at the community as such, since that would in any case be unconstitutional. The MJC decided not to conduct a publicity campaign against it, while watching for any signs of real Islamophobia.<sup>1457</sup>

Apart from a focus on redistribution of power and wealth, and checks and balances on the executive, the IUC submission also emphasized grassroots democracy and the countering of the formation of a strong elite based on state patronage. While the draft constitution provided for 200-400 members of parliament, the IUC proposed a maximum of 200.<sup>1458</sup> This would have limited the ability to incorporate many political groups and potential challengers in the political system by extending the opportunity for representation and patronage.

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<sup>1452</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., pp. 5 and 10-14.

<sup>1453</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>1454</sup> "Detention and torture – one of two possibilities", *Al-Miftah*, vol. 1 no. 2 (November/December 1998), p. 4.

<sup>1455</sup> "Ulama address Muslim concerns to Zuma", *Ad-Da'wah*, May 2000, p. 7.

<sup>1456</sup> "Ulama, MRN call on govt to drop anti-terror bill", *Muslim Views*, September 2000, p. 3.

<sup>1457</sup> Interview with Sh. Achmat Sedick, Athlone, 5 October 2000.

<sup>1458</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 15.

The 1996 draft constitution stated that the president must be elected by the National Assembly from within its own ranks, while the IUC submission in art. 79 stated that the president should be elected by universal suffrage during a national general election.<sup>1459</sup> This measure would have countered the increased centralisation of executive power through the party list system in parliament.

Art. 50(3) stated that public representatives at national, provincial and local level were to be remunerated according to their attendance and, in terms of a new Art. 204, “shall be held jointly, severally and personally accountable for all the administration of public funds, under their control. If such funds are dishonestly, fraudulently or negligently disbursed, such funds may be recovered from the relevant member of bodies.”<sup>1460</sup> This measure tried to counter the potential for neo-patrimonial politics.

Similarly, all political parties were to register their election manifestoes and if a party became the governing party and failed to execute or implement its election promises, the party would be held liable for its failure or omission to comply. On application by any South African to the High Court of SA, such a party had to rescind such a cancellation immediately, resign from office, or resign from office and hold a referendum for the relevant electorate within one month, at its own cost, to seek authorization for its deviation from its election manifesto. Upon failing to gain a majority, a general election had to be called.

The political order envisaged by the IUC in its submission would therefore focus on redistribution, checks on the executive and grassroots democracy. As far as redistribution was concerned, it was quite close to the position of the PAC and two ANC allies, the SA Communist Party and COSATU. As far as checks on the executive and popular participation were concerned, the IUC was close to the MJC, Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties. The submission focused on a political order in which the state apparatus would be checked and political parties and representatives held accountable, with an emphasis on reducing the opportunity for neo-patrimonial and elite politics and increasing the role of oversight and participation by the population.

### **Economic solidarity and divisions**

To achieve equity, affirmative action measures to protect and advance groups disadvantaged by unfair discrimination was accepted in the IUC submission. However, the IUC view differed from ANC policy: “Affirmative action based on race or any other irrational criteria is unacceptable and against Basic Human Morality. We believe in equality of opportunity, but equality of outcome cannot be guaranteed.”<sup>1461</sup>

Most Muslims belonged to Coloured or Asian groups and considered the government’s focus on black empowerment as a threat to their own jobs, social services and economic well-being. This IUC measure deracialised affirmative action and provided a basis to

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<sup>1459</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>1460</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

<sup>1461</sup> Art. 7.2, *Summary of the IUC’s Submission to the Constitutional Assembly*, IUC, undated.

limit the black empowerment focus, while still allowing for measures to advance people from disadvantaged groups, including Coloureds and Asians.

Art. 14(6) of the IUC submission stipulated that 'No person shall be compelled to pay any tax the proceeds of which are specifically allocated in whole or in part for the purposes of a religion other than his own, unless the proceeds are equitably allocated.'<sup>1462</sup> The idea of consolidating and differentiating the economic power of Muslims, by taxation or other means, enjoyed wider support among the Muslim leadership.

Sh. Faik Gamielien, a prominent MJC member, in 1997 supported a treasury, based on Muslim taxation that could support a council of Muslim leaders.<sup>1463</sup> Sh. Abdurraghiem Sallie supported a central fund for managing the affairs of mosques and religious schools while Imam Abdul Moutie Saban, another prominent MJC member, suggested in 1998 that Muslims use their purchasing power to support fellow-Muslims and consolidate their economic position.<sup>1464</sup> The MJC's mouthpiece also proposed that Muslim business people should establish a body to promote business interests and other goals for the cause of Allah.<sup>1465</sup>

After 1994, Muslims made considerable progress in obtaining top managerial positions in major companies but also in the formation of black empowerment groups.<sup>1466</sup> In the SA context, this fact would have provided a counter to a redistribution aimed at the Muslim middle class and lower middle class.

However, the IUC, which derived most of its support from poorer Muslims, also gave attention to the protection of workers rights. Article 21 subordinated economic activities to Islam by stating that 'everybody has the right to pursue the livelihood of their choice...in accordance with the Basic Human Morality of Society.'<sup>1467</sup> This precluded prostitution and child labour.

Art. 22(2) stated that workers had the right to trade unionism and to refuse anything which conflicts with the Basic Human Morality of Society.' In addition, Article 22(5) explicitly stipulated certain Muslim rights, including attendance of the obligatory Friday prayers and the right to be dressed modestly.<sup>1468</sup> The MJC had also issued a ruling to support the right of workers in this regard. The Summary also referred to the protection of the rights of Muslim workers, which the Muslim parties tried to combine with the rights and interests of its small businessmen and middle class supporters. While there

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<sup>1462</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>1463</sup> Faik Gamielien, "The 'Ulema: its Leadership Role Revisited," *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 32 no. 1 (February 1997), pp. 24-31 on p. 31.

<sup>1464</sup> Imam Abdul Moutie Saban, "Khutbah focus," *Ad-Da'wah*, August 1998, p. 8.

<sup>1465</sup> "The role of the Muslim business person," *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1999, p. 7. An appeal for greater involvement of professionals and academics was also published in "An appeal to our Muslim academics and professionals," *Ad-Da'wah*, December 1998, p. 10.

<sup>1466</sup> Interview with Imam Ali Gierdien, the first non-white president of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry after 1994, in "Corporate Conduct", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 33 no. 1 1997, pp. 28-35 on p. 29.

<sup>1467</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>1468</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 6.

were clear socio-economic divisions between Muslims, most of the major Muslim institutions tried to address the concerns of both working class and middle class Muslims.

### **Muslim religious, communal and political authorities**

Art. 14(1) of the IUC submission amended the 1996 constitution so that everyone had the right to freedom of religion but also took responsibility for the same, an amendment that could serve to entrench this protection of a minority.<sup>1469</sup> The IUC submission also created a basis for Muslim schools and colleges. Article 28(1)(a) stated that everyone has the right to receive religious instructions in accordance with his/her religious beliefs. Art. 28(3) stated that everyone has the right to educational institutions based on a common culture, language or religion, provided that there must be no discrimination on the ground of race and that the state may not discriminate against any particularist educational institution on that ground.<sup>1470</sup>

Art. 30 stated that ‘everyone has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of their choice, but no one exercising these rights may violate the rights of anyone else.’<sup>1471</sup> This created a space for Afrikaans, the vernacular of most Muslims in the Cape. However, the struggle of Afrikaans against English dominance, a core part of Afrikaner symbolic politics after 1994, never formed a major part of Muslim symbolic politics in the Cape, nor of Coloured and Indian politics.

Historically, many of the Muslim clerics, academics and professionals were English-speaking, and the elite mostly used English for higher language functions, such as formal education.<sup>1472</sup> English was the preferred language for Muslim politics over decades, also to indicate opposition to various forms of Afrikaner nationalism.<sup>1473</sup> After 1994, the Muslim print and radio media and the official usage of the MJC, IUC, PAGAD and Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties were overwhelmingly in English.

Art. 14(3) of the IUC submission inserted and recognised the validity of Muslim marriages and divorces, and removed them from the application of the Bill of Rights: ‘The aforesaid persons and/or groups shall not be bound by any sections of the Bill of Rights.’<sup>1474</sup> The Summary explained that the MPL could not be made subordinate to man-made law,<sup>1475</sup> which rooted authority over MPL away from the government.

The draft constitution did not provide for Muslim courts to enforce Muslim Personal Law (MPL). Art. 14(5) of the IUC’s submission provided for the creation of a Muslim Court of First Instance and a Muslim Court of Appeal, where suitably qualified Muslim judges

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<sup>1469</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>1470</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>1471</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>1472</sup> For the definition of high language functions, see C. Ferguson, “Diglossia” in P.P. Giglioli (ed.)

*Language and social context* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), pp. 232-251.

<sup>1473</sup> Steyn, *Tuiste*, op. cit., pp. 270-271.

<sup>1474</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., IUC, p. 4.

<sup>1475</sup> *Summary of the IUC’s Submission to the Constitutional Assembly*, IUC, undated.

were to be appointed by the president on the advice of the Muslim community.<sup>1476</sup> While the draft 1996 constitution saw this as a matter to be dealt with by the provincial government, the IUC submission stated that the national government should deal with it.

The IUC submission inserted art. 14(4) into the 1996 constitution to create a Muslim Council. The Council would consist of a chairman appointed for 5 years and 4 other members appointed for 3 years, eligible for re-appointment. In terms of article 14.4.10 the Council would consider and report on any matters affecting Muslims in South Africa as may be referred to the Council by three sources, namely parliament, including the speaker, the government, including a minister, or a petition by the Muslim community.<sup>1477</sup>

MJC members Sh. Abdurraghiem Sallie and Sh. Faik Gamieldeen openly supported such a Muslim authority that would serve the political and social interests of all Muslims,<sup>1478</sup> probably representing a significant component of clerics in this regard. Gamieldeen favoured the election of a Council of Ministers consisting of Islamic scholars, academics and business people to administer the affairs of the Muslim community. This would not replace the clerics as a group, who should retain their position based on knowledge and the service they rendered to the community.<sup>1479</sup>

According to the IUC proposals, all legislation could only be presented to the President for assent if it was accompanied by a certificate of the Speaker that in the opinion of the Council the legislation would not be a differentiating measure. A differentiating measure was defined as ‘any measure which is or is likely in its practical application to be disadvantageous to persons of the Muslim community and not equally disadvantageous to persons of other such communities, either directly by prejudicing or indirectly by giving advantage to persons of another community.’<sup>1480</sup>

However, legislation constituting differentiating measures could be passed if it obtained the support of three-quarters of all members of parliament. In addition, the article would not apply to funding-related or security-related legislation or urgent executive decrees.<sup>1481</sup> This indicated an acceptance of a majoritarian principle, at least for the time being, as well as certain public interest concerns also reflected in the Islamic doctrine of *maslaha*.

According to the submission, a referendum had to be held when any legislation will have the effect of an abrogation, variation or cancellation of any of the community’s religious beliefs, religious practice, tradition, or any issue affecting the way of life of any

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<sup>1476</sup> Annexure IUC 2, *Comments*, op. cit., pp. 10-11. Also see the *Islamic Unity Convention’s response to the South African Law Commission – Project 59: Islamic marriages and related matters* (September 2000).

<sup>1477</sup> Annexure IUC 2, *Comments*, op. cit., pp. 5-6.

<sup>1478</sup> “Determined to serve,” *Muslim Views*, January/February 2001, p. 13.

<sup>1479</sup> Faaik Gamieldeen, “The ‘Ulema: its Leadership Role Revisited,” *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 32 no. 1 (February 1997), pp. 24-31 on p. 31.

<sup>1480</sup> Annexure IUC 2, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>1481</sup> Annexure IUC 2, *Comments*, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

community in SA, excluding race. When the issue was peculiar to a community, it had to be held within that community.<sup>1482</sup>

This section reflected the view of Sh. Abdul Karriem Toffar, first chairman of the IUC, which stated that clear entrenched rights in the constitution prevented government from trampling on the rights of minorities, especially religious minorities. Such entrenched clauses had to be open to change only by a referendum of the members of the religious minority.<sup>1483</sup> The IUC submission would have been compatible with the views of the MJC, Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties, all of which argued for political processes that allowed Muslims as a community to express their concerns and pursue their interests and ideals.

As Melucci states, a definition of democracy in a complex society must include two freedoms: the freedom not to belong, as the right to withdraw from one's constituted identity in order to create a new one, and the freedom not to be represented, as the right to reject or modify the given conditions of representation. The approach of the MJC was to reject the constituted identity of a secular citizenship and to try and change the conditions of Muslim representation. However, if read together with the non-participation and discourses of the IUC and Qibla, and the links of their leaders to PAGAD, the approach of the IUC was to use the existing system to build the foundations for Muslim symbolic sphere and authorities that could also be separated from the new political system in SA.

### **Islamic space and infrastructure**

The disappearance of separate areas and schools meant that some Muslims, both in the Cape and northern provinces, feared that Muslims would be overwhelmed and their cultural and religious ethos undermined. Many in the Cape saw the migration of blacks from the Eastern Cape and elsewhere in Africa as putting pressure on their space and social services. In addition, the end of SA's isolation after 1994 exposed Muslims to the Western media culture and lifestyle challenges. Indifference toward the state prevailed, combined with an active move into an own Muslim social and spiritual sphere that included a rise in Muslim private schools and religious schools.<sup>1484</sup>

*Boorhaanol Islam*, reflecting a view held across the Muslim spectrum, also thought that the Islamic value system could best be served via the institution of the family. However, it was threatened by increasing numbers of single-parent families, one parent being non-Muslim, and Muslims settling in areas without Islamic infrastructure.<sup>1485</sup> In this context, *Boorhaanol Islam* emphasized that "Islam functions optimally in a community situation, and the major challenge will be to maintain those links."<sup>1486</sup>

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<sup>1482</sup> Annexure IUC 3, *Comments*, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>1483</sup> A.K. Toffar, "Islamic Personal Law in a Muslim minority situation", *Muslim Views*, April 1994, p. 7.

<sup>1484</sup> Lecture by Shuaib Manjra at Parliament of World Religions, 4 December 1999.

<sup>1485</sup> "New challenges facing Muslims", *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 29 no. 3 (1994), pp. 2-3.

<sup>1486</sup> "Quo Vadis Muslims?," *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 29 no. 3 1994, pp. 2-3; "New challenges facing Muslims," *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 29 no. 4 1994, pp. 2-3, and M.C. D'Arcy, "The Colours of Eid," *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 44.



The MJC formed a Committee for the Preservation of the Tana Baru in 1995 to stop the desecration of the cemetery by squatters.<sup>1487</sup> This led to the formation of the Tana Baru Trust in 1998, which was headed by Imam Bassier.<sup>1488</sup> The clerics also played a leading role in projects to protect the Muslim physical heritage, shrines and graveyards.<sup>1489</sup>

The clustering of Muslims in certain areas also provided a base for a specifically Muslim community life. In addition, Boorhaanol Islam proposed independent facilitators, wide consultation including all major actors, resulting in a common vision, and closer cooperation with Islamic banks. The Bo-Kaap Neighbourhood Watch, of which Imam Ishmail Davids was an executive committee member, also provided area security with its own patrol vehicle and arrested suspects, while cooperating with Caledon Square police station.<sup>1490</sup>

Imam Abdurrahman Bassier of the Boorhaanol Islam movement promoted the concept that the Muslim area in the Bo-Kaap would be made exclusive, due to its history and existing Islamic infrastructure.<sup>1491</sup> In this regard, he enjoyed the support of some other clerics too, including imam Moutie Saban of the MJC.<sup>1492</sup> Bassier also tried to influence owners not to “reduce the Muslim *ummah*” near the mosque by selling a property in the area to a non-Muslim. Such a sale might reduce the blessing of his profit by the unpleasant habits of the new owner, causing unpleasant opinions and comments by the Muslim neighbours, he stated.<sup>1493</sup>

A minority of Muslims in the area tried to rename the area Malay Quarter and link it in this way with its history and the revival of Cape Malay identity during the Tricentenary Celebrations of Islam in SA in 1994. The *Boorhaanol Islam* magazine also approached all major political parties standing in the 1999 general elections for its views on this issue: “Given its unique place as the cradle of Islam and the presence of 12 mosques in such a confined area, do you support the concept of an exclusive Muslim area in the Bokaap.”<sup>1494</sup>

No political party actively promoted this cause, and the MJC or IUC as organizations never openly supported the Bo-Kaap initiative. Imam Rashied Omar of Claremont Main Street mosque and other progressives clearly rejected a “self-insulating” approach. However, in general the pattern of Muslim spatial clustering persisted and there were no signs that many clerics were opposed to it or actively promoting a change in the situation.

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<sup>1487</sup> “Tana Baru Clean-Up,” *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 30 no. 4 (1995) p. 56. See also Achmat Davids, “Save the Tana Baru – The formation of a trust,” *Muslim Views*, May 1998, p. 5.

<sup>1488</sup> “Tana Baru Trust registered,” *Muslim Views*, March 1999, p. 13, “Be part of preserving a national heritage,” *Muslim Views*, December 2000, p. 15 and “UCT/Muslim Views join Tana Baru development project,” *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 29.

<sup>1489</sup> Fu’ad Rahman, “Oudekraal Kramat ground in danger,” *Muslim Views*, February 1996, p. 8.

<sup>1490</sup> Interview with Imam Ishmail Davids, Bo-Kaap, 15 November 2000.

<sup>1491</sup> Imam Abdurrahman Bassier, “Eidul Fitr Ghutbah,” *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 31 no. 1 1996, pp. 4-6 on pp. 5-6 and “Investigative Report: election '99,” *Boorhaanol Islam*, vol. 34 no. 2 (1999), pp. 39-45 on p. 43.

<sup>1492</sup> *Muslim Views*, November 2000, p. 39.

<sup>1493</sup> Imam Abdurrahman Bassier, “Eidul Fitr Ghutbah,” *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 31 no. 1 (1996), pp. 4-6 on pp. 5-6.

<sup>1494</sup> “Investigative Report: election '99,” *Boorhaanol Islam* vol. 34 no. 2 (1999), pp. 39-45 on p. 43.

This clustering added a physical dimension to the sacred order transmitted by the clerics in their roles as interpreters of Islam and custodians of the Muslim community.

## **Conclusion**

Virtually all major Muslim groups agreed that Islam and politics could not be separated. This included the MJC, Boorhaanol Islam, the progressive thinkers, Qibla, the IUC, PAGAD, the Muslim parties, and some Muslim leaders in the ANC and secular opposition parties. Some Muslim leaders in the ANC like Dullah Omar supported a separation between politics and religion. The MJC, Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties all promoted participation in the political system, while Qibla, the IUC and PAGAD after 1997 had a more sceptical and mostly rejectionist approach to participation. Both participation and rejectionism aimed at building and reconstituting the divided Muslim community and its structures.

While the IUC had the most comprehensively formulated approach, it enjoyed increasingly limited support by 2000. However, its views on a community leadership council and authoritative Islamic courts were shared by the MJC too. Prominent MJC clerics shared the IUC's views on a Muslim tax basis and economic consolidation of the community, although there may have been differences in emphasis on workers rights between various actors. Redistribution of wealth within the diverse Muslim community also never became a dominant theme. The MJC and IUC discourses added a particularist focus to the often universalist themes of worker discourses in SA during the same period, while the theme of Muslim economic consolidation provided a possible deepening of or counter to the government's program to empower blacks economically and create a new black business elite.

In addition to providing an Islamic discourse suited to the ANC's political struggle, the progressives tried to change the dominance of traditionalist discourses and clerics among Muslims. In this regard, it shared many themes with Qibla and leaders in PAGAD and the IUC, but their links and loyalties to the ANC government and the radical vigilantism supported by Qibla and leaders in PAGAD and the IUC prevented the emergence of an informal or formal alliance between them in Muslim politics. While the Muslim parties mostly reproduced traditionalist values, the MJC clerics remained the dominant interpreters of Islam in the period 1994-2000.

In the arena of symbolic production, the relations between clerics and the ANC government were diverse and spanned the entire spectrum. Some clerics were politically quietist. The progressive clerics were mostly uncritical of the symbolic capital produced by the ANC, combined certain strands in it with their reformist and postmodernist interpretations of Islam, and inserted ANC symbolic themes into Islamic debates.

The MJC leadership tried to monopolize the site of Islamic interpretation and did act as community leaders and as intermediaries between the community and the government. On some issues they were willing to actively support the government, but on others they were highly critical, resistant and conditional in their cooperation.

The MJC leadership's major effect was that of creating a critical, alternative discourse within the ANC government's broad alliance, in line with its hope to have a Muslim president one day, and contributing to a symbolic sphere based on its more traditionalist interpretation of Islam. However, the MJC did not usurp the authority of individual local imams and clerics, whose political views and choices were as diverse as those of their congregations.

The historical status of the clerics in the Cape, and their role as community leaders, meant that they remained important in the contests of the symbolic sphere. However, non-clerical interpreters also played an important role in initiating and diversifying new symbolic production in Muslims' interaction with the government and the political system. Various initiatives of the IUC, PAGAD, Boorhaanol Islam, Muslim parties, Muslims in the ANC and the Muslim media reflected their role.

The most important group of clerics, the MJC, as well as the IUC, denied the South African state authority over MPL. Based on their interpretation of divine law, and in the case of some perhaps buttressed by a sense of religious and cultural superiority, this constituted a different basis for legitimacy in the symbolic sphere to that of a majoritarian democracy. In addition, the MJC leadership considered an Islamic political order a long-term objective, while the IUC started to promote a political order infused with Islamic values and an Islamic law system outside the cultural confines of a Western system.

While these groups promoted a symbolic sphere with clear boundaries, Boorhaanol Islam supported an exclusive Muslim geographical area. This was a symbolic challenge to the main focus of the new unitary order, and since it could provide a precedent for various frameworks of Afrikaner and Zulu self-determination in geographical areas, it stood little chance of being accepted by the ANC during the period 1994-2000. However, few if any Muslim leaders openly advocated that clustered Muslim residential patterns in the Cape be countered.

The Coloured, Asian, white and black Muslims with their socio-economic, ethnic, cultural and religious differences were provided with unifying symbolic frameworks for political action. Coloured and Asian Muslims, numerical minorities in a majoritarian democracy, also obtained other frameworks for self-assertion in the new political system, in combination with or in distinction to Coloured and Asian group politics.

The discourses of the main Muslim media tended to overemphasize the support of Muslims for the ANC struggle before 1994 and marginalized or underemphasized several themes. These included the disjunction between the dominance of MJC and IUC leaders, and their media, that were close to the ANC or PAC respectively, and the support of most Muslims for the opposition parties. A second and related theme was the cooperation with or acquiescence in Dutch, English and Afrikaner rule by many if not most Muslims before 1994. A third theme that was marginal among Muslim institutions in general was the common focus on morality in the public domain by conservative Coloured and white Christians in the NP and ACDP and the pursuit of alliances.

Marginal socio-cultural themes included the dominance of English as a political language while Afrikaans was the vernacular of most Muslims. Another mostly marginal theme was the dominance of Cape Malays among the clerics of the Cape and the economic dominance of Asian Muslims. A sixth mostly marginal theme was the social differentiation between black and non-black Muslims, between Coloured, Malay and Asian Muslims, between Asian Muslims from different cultural and geographical backgrounds, and between Muslim blacks in the Cape based on ethnicity, class and their migration background.

These themes were related to historical and current constellations of power within and outside the Muslim community. Considerations related to power and influence, and the vulnerable minority status of Muslims, contributed to them being under-publicized by Muslims in the non-Muslim public domain.

The development of community security structures enjoyed the support of all major Muslim actors, with differences between those supporting community vigilantism and those advocating a combination of community law enforcement and cooperation with the state authorities. These developments reflected the limited ability of the new state to protect its citizens and its consequent legitimacy crisis among several Muslim groups and their supporters.

In Muslim discourses, the state had to become a dispenser of morality, and Islamic morality at that. In the case of the IUC and MJC, the emphasis was on checks and balances and democratization of a unitary state in the form of oversight and grassroots participation. In the case of the Muslim parties, the focus was on decentralization of power to provinces. In most Muslim discourses, greater recognition of Muslim authority over Muslim affairs and Islam law was emphasized.

These discourses had a very limited influence on the state and government. While Muslim individuals in the state and government structures had a significant presence, this did not effect into any insertion of Islamic values in the secular political system. Protest and lobbying by Muslims not involved in the government had a very limited effect, probably only related to the wearing of the veil by women drivers and continued attention to MPL.

The various discourses of Muslim groups created a symbolic base for community and religious leaders and structures within the new political system. However, they also served to recreate Muslims as individuals and as a community. Individual Muslims were provided with broader choices in terms of political participation in the system and other means of political assertion, political parties, security structures, economic networks, social conduct and authoritative interpreters of Islam.

However, the Muslim discourses did not only have the effect of emphasizing the distinctive nature of Muslims and Muslim interests and ideals. In the case of the MJC, for

example, the discourse served to also re-connect Muslims to the new political system, but on the basis of a recast group identity and in a distinctive relationship.

In the case of the IUC and Boorhaanol Islam, their discourses used the existing system to build the foundations for Muslim symbolic spheres, conceptualizations of communal identity and authorities that could, in some contingencies, also be separated from the new political system in SA. The greater role of transnational dimensions in the social and political imaginary of many Muslim discourses also recast their possible future conceptualizations of citizenship and political authority.

During the period 1994-2000, Muslims in the Western Cape constituted a diverse group composed of individuals often carrying several identities, including economic, racial, cultural and professional identities. They were also exposed to different discourses. However, certain environmental factors both diversified and intensified the experiences of Muslims as Muslims. These included the increasing number of mosques and Muslim schools and the broadcasts by two community radio stations, the geographical foci of settlement, distinctive architecture, religious rituals, historical commemorations and community events.

These environmental factors also infused esthetic and individual and group psychological dimensions into the symbolic sphere, which helped Muslims in a mostly non-Islamic environment to keep fast to “the rope of Allah”.<sup>1495</sup> The contests and discourses in the symbolic sphere, interacting with these contested physical spaces, resulted in the assertion and re-creation of Muslim identities and Muslim politics in the diverse political landscape of South Africa.

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<sup>1495</sup> Quran, surah 3 verse 103.

## **Chapter 9: Conclusions**

The aim of this study has been to establish how Muslims found their way in the new political order in South Africa during the period 1994-2000. The focus of the study has been on Muslims in the greater Cape Town area of the Western Cape province in South Africa. However, the study has also looked at the context of local, national and transnational politics and a nexus of histories and Muslim identities over several centuries.

The conclusions below relate to the main dynamics of Muslim identities, Islamic frameworks and Muslim politics. However, Muslims formed a diverse population with distinctive groups and sometimes communities. The historically rooted Bo-Kaap area next to Table Mountain and the sea, with its old mosques, was close to the cosmopolitan but socio-economically and ethnically divided city of Cape Town. It provided a different context and exuded a different atmosphere than the environment of some of the more recently established predominantly Coloured Cape Flats areas, or the black townships with its swathes of informal housing and socio-economic neglect, or the picturesque towns and rural areas of the Boland where some Muslims lived.

Some of the concomitant differences in Muslim politics may have been covered by the study, but due to the limits of the existing available data, others may only be uncovered by local ethnographic studies and field research. In addition, the study represents an excerpt from a certain period of history, and its conclusions therefore have a time-bound dimension which may limit their application to the same Muslim population in future. The possibility also exists that during this period local or individual exceptions to the general dynamics existed, as well as a diversity of local combinations and forms.

The conclusions of the study relate to the main political dynamics among Muslims, but they should therefore be read with a consciousness of their limitations. These Muslims also carried racial, cultural, gender and professional identities and belonged to certain socio-economic and age groups. For purposes of political analysis, people remain too multifaceted, psychologically and emotionally complex and politically dynamic to be completely reducible to the designation of being Muslim. A focus on the Muslim identity of people, and even on the other categories, may still constitute only a partial framework of understanding of the political life-stories and choices of individual Muslims.

The study looks closely at the intersection between Islamic frameworks, Muslim identities and politics. However, such an approach runs the risk of creating an overwhelmingly politicized image of Islam. It is therefore emphasized that while the study does explore many politically-related dimensions of Muslims and Islam, it does not pretend to also represent an in-depth study of the moral values, spiritual foundations, religious experiences and the esthetic and cultural dimensions of Islam among the Muslims of the Western Cape during the particular period. The study does not completely encompass the diverse meanings of Islam in the spiritual and social lives of less politically-minded devout and less-devout Muslims, or the ways in which spiritual discourses articulated new limits and new possibilities within Islam.

## **Contested dimensions of Muslim identities**

The Muslim population in the Western Cape, or in South Africa, has not been static or homogeneous. Initially, it encompassed diverse ethnicities, cultures, socio-economic groups and Islamic doctrines from India, Madagascar, Zanzibar, Ceylon and Indonesia. New people were being added all the time, with contests over boundaries, identities and symbolic frameworks being part of the mosaic.

These processes occurred in different local and international economic and political orders, including periods of Dutch colonial, English colonial and Afrikaner nationalist rule. They continued within the ANC-ruled political order since 1994, sometimes prompted by new arrivals from Arabian and South Asian countries, and especially from black Africa. Some Muslims also formed part of the emigration of large numbers of skilled people from South Africa after 1994, and of an “internal emigration” or withdrawal from the public domain to avoid much contact with various perceived manifestations of the new order.

While much of the first 140 years of Muslim life is unknown, different Muslim communal identities were contested and recast several times between 1652 and 1994. By the late 1700s, for example, the term Malay became more widely used by the Dutch authorities to describe Muslims and almost anyone who was not Bantu or of European descent. In the 19th century, a clear separation between a Malay identity for Muslims and a developing Coloured identity also emerged, while in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Muslim identities subsumed Cape Malay, Coloured, white, black and Asian elements.

Islam is a universalist religion and the transnational dimension of Muslim identities also expanded after 1994. The expansion was reflected in greater contact between local Muslims and Muslim symbolic spaces, institutions, religious figures and political authorities elsewhere in the world. In the Western Cape, this dimension was heavily determined by struggles and developments in the Middle East, with South Asian and especially recast Southeast Asian elements forming an important secondary dimension of many Muslim identities.

However, while the transnational element infused Muslim identities, the local context did so too. This was reflected in the interaction between Muslim identities and discourses relating to five themes, namely racial and ethnic identities, gender, socio-economic positions, and space.

The political order since 1994 encompassed diverse networks of power and values. Whereas Muslims tended to be on the margins of the political orders developed under Dutch, English and Afrikaner rule, individual Muslims would also play an important role in the development of the new ANC-ruled state as a complex nexus of formations during 1994-2000. However, the authority of the new government and state did not remove the impact of group identities and trust, social differentiation and distance, and group mobilization on political competition and cooperation.

Coloureds constituted almost 80% of Muslims in the area at the time, but the more than 211,000 Coloured Muslims formed a minority among Coloureds who were the majority population in greater Cape Town and the province. Muslims formed a majority among the small group of Indians in the Western Cape. They also formed a marginal minority in the multi-ethnic white group, previously the main political basis of central government, and a marginal minority among multi-ethnic black people, now the main political basis of the central government.

In the Western Cape particular territorial and regional dynamics reinforced group divisions and group politics. Many Coloureds perceived the Western Cape as their place, from where they originated and to which they had a privileged claim. Coloured politics as the politics of a minority was historically often characterised by a dominant trend to align with white identities and predominantly white-led political projects, a smaller trend to align with predominantly black political projects, and a third trend for a distinctive identity and political assertion.

After the fall of the white-ruled system - one of the foundations on which the dominant Coloured identities and their intermediate socio-political positions rested - Coloured identities were recast and group politics reconstituted. A wide spectrum of positions on Coloured identity emerged, including an exclusivist Coloured identity, more particularist and constructed Griqua or Khoisan identities that marginalized or excluded Muslim Coloureds, and a resurgence of Christian identification among some Coloureds.

None of the recast identities achieved a completely hegemonic position, and Muslim and non-Muslim Coloureds shared many common concerns and cultural formations. However, the fluid context and contestation enabled and probably fuelled a new exploration of Muslim identities and Islamic frameworks in politics among Coloured Muslims. For Muslim Coloureds situated between black and white groups in the political order since 1994, Muslim identities allowed the option of a symbolic framework of identity that was not controlled by either blacks or whites. In addition, Islam provided an alternative civilizational complex and their own platform for self-representation to the dominant and imposed Western one.

A more assertive Muslim identity and framework also imposed some form of provisional order in a context of widespread social anomie, economic hardship and political marginalisation. Muslim identities thus allowed an expression of differentiation from many other Coloureds in terms of status and transnational influences. At the same time, they linked up with the broader theme of respectability in major Coloured discourses.

The recasting of a Southeast Asian Muslim identity with the Tricentenary festivities in Cape Town in March 1994, which celebrated three centuries of Islam in southern Africa, reinforced the differentiation between Muslim and non-Muslim Coloureds, while also reinforcing differences with Indian Muslims.

However, other discourses also continued to exert their influence among Muslims. Most Coloureds could claim an indigenous basis and previously pursued assimilation with the



dominant white group, but most Indians could not claim an indigenous basis and did not pursue assimilation. Muslim Indians lived in a context of tensions between internal differences, a limited emotional bond with South Africa in the case of some and many links to South Asia. Their responses after 1994 were diverse.

For some, Islam provided a potential transnational and unifying discursive space for Muslim Indians, for others a framework for the re-appropriation of cultural legacies. A turn to Sufism became prominent after 1994, sometimes with a socio-political dimension, and sometimes as a turning away from socio-political struggles to the mystical meanings of Islam. For some, Islam became a way of de-emphasizing the Indian geographical links, purging them of Hindu links, reinforcing the links of Muslim Indians to South Africa and preventing them from being submerged by the non-Muslim majorities around them. However, while increased secularization also affected some, in general Muslim consciousness and identity became more significant.

Previously, the black African dimensions of Islam had often been ignored or underemphasized, but due to the post-1994 political order and the African Renaissance discourses, these dimensions received renewed attention among Muslims. The post-1994 period saw a greater consciousness among the MJC leadership and some clerics concerning endeavours to spread Islam among black people. The main Muslim media also criticized the hostile attitudes of many Muslims to refugees from Africa in terms of African and Islamic solidarity frameworks, and some clerics promoted the centrality of Africa to Islam and local Muslims. Black Muslims formed part of the group of Muslims with the greatest actual growth in numbers, albeit from a low base.

However, the vast majority of blacks turned to mainstream or charismatic churches, indigenous religions or new combinations of Christianity and indigenous religions, not to Islam. Black Muslims mostly had a low social status among other blacks and introduced elements of traditional black African religions into Islamic frameworks. There also was a gap between some of the black clerics, seen as being closer to the non-black dominated MJC, and other black followers of Islam.

In general, many Muslims were relatively apathetic about the experiences of black Muslims in the rest of Africa, prioritising the experiences of fellow-Muslims in Chechnya, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and especially Palestine. Many non-black Muslims did not reconceptualize black African migrants and refugees as part of the core local Muslim community and its institutions.

In the case of the ANC's African Renaissance discourse, which allowed a potential common African identity, most Coloured and Indian Muslims responded with apathy or saw it as a form of black identity politics irrelevant to their own concerns. The dominant perception among blacks remained that Coloured and Indian Muslims retained a hegemonic claim to both Islamic knowledge, and a racialized contestation along these lines also emerged within the Muslim population.

Muslims thus constituted people often carrying multiple identities and occupying various positions in the prevailing socio-political and socioeconomic constellation. They formed a diverse and stratified population, and a numerical minority among other groups, but they also created an arena for ethnic and sometimes racial contestation over the symbolic capital of Islam.

Although ANC discourses of re-racialization of the economic and political order eventually dominated in the late 1990s, being Muslim had a non-racial discursive dimension for some Muslims. For many others, being Muslim also had an ethnic or racial discursive dimension, often reinforced by socio-economic processes, status considerations, the identity discourses of other groups, and political struggles. In this regard, there were considerable similarities between Muslims in 2000 and the generations of Muslims in 1850 or 1900.

The dominant Islamic frameworks and social discourses among Muslims remained very male-centred and constituted local Muslim identities. As reflected in their response to gender debates in the Muslim Personal Law Board and the Claremont mosque incident, the MJC leadership strongly opposed changes to the social order regarding women and their role in families. The MJC's professionalization of the role of clerics only provided for male clerics and in 94 or more than 75% of mosques in the year 2000, including those built from 1994 onwards, facilities were predominantly for males.

These discourses contrasted with the relatively strong or matricentral decision-making position of many Muslim women in households, and gender discourses were employed by the progressive thinkers to weaken traditionalist discourses in general. However, the progressive thinkers' reconsideration of gender within Islamic frameworks never became a major factor in Muslim discourses and Muslim politics.

Muslims were a socio-economically disparate population, with most in an intermediate socio-economic position between whites and blacks. A few Muslims belonged to the entrepreneurial and business elites. They were often apolitical but interacted with the new ANC political elite and both cooperated and competed with the more entrenched white and Jewish business elites. A small but significant group belonged to the professional and broader middle class. They produced many of the Muslim leaders in the ANC, the NP and the DA. They also formed the driving force in the MJC leadership, the Muslim community radio stations, the Islamist parties, *Muslim Views* and the early PAGAD. Many modernist, postmodernist and progressive Muslim discourses were mainly produced by and aimed at people in this small group.

A substantial sector of the Muslim population lived just above or under the poverty line. Many of them had limited education and skills, as well as an uneven Islamic knowledge. Like some middle class Muslims, some of them were also sources of secularization and non-traditionalist interpretations of Islam amid Muslims. A large part of the discourses of PAGAD and the MJC targeted them and represented an effort to regain their adherence to particular Islamic frameworks. This was done in order to reconnect them with particular interpretations of Islam but also to extend authority over them.

The processes and symbols of globalisation had an effect on the economic position of many Muslims in the Western Cape, who feared for their jobs or prosperity, or on their sense of religious and cultural integrity. Resistance to this form of globalisation constituted a potential basis for uniting black, Coloured and Indian Muslims and non-Muslims. Instead, the dominant Muslim discourses tended to link up with those positing some competition between the Muslim world and a reified West in the form of the US and Western-dominated institutions like the IMF and World Bank, reinforcing this transnational dimension of Muslim identity.

Socio-economic considerations and positions played a major role and resulted in clear political divisions in the Coloured and Indian and Muslim populations. This coincided with a rise in class factors regarding self-identification among Coloureds and Indians in the period. Similar considerations to some extent also figured in the struggle of the early PAGAD against Muslim gang leaders and druglords, and in the contest between the cleric-based MJC and the so-called community-based IUC.

Socio-economic positions did constitute one of the axes of identification among many Muslims. The limited economic resources of many Muslims enhanced the authority of the clerics with their Islamic frameworks over impoverished and poor Muslims with uneven Islamic knowledge in informal settlements and townships on the Cape Flats. Contesting themes of social solidarity with fellow-Muslims, social justice and welfare activities became even more important in this context. Thus, there was a socio-economic discursive dimension to many frameworks of Muslim identity.

Certain environmental factors both diversified and intensified the experiences of many Muslims as Muslims in the period after 1994. These included the increasing number of mosques and Muslim schools and the broadcasts of two new community radio stations, the historical and geographical foci of settlement, distinctive architecture and visual landscapes, religious rituals and languages, commemorations and community events. These factors created a contested and shifting complex of spaces in which many Muslims could create a distinctive Islamic environment and a Muslim community life.

Several Muslim clerics participated in private lobbying and popular mobilization on issues related to several spaces during the period 1994-2000, including the project to proclaim the Bo-Kaap a Muslim area. In the case of the protest against the Oudekraal Development's threat to Muslim shrines, Muslims cooperated with environmental groups. Muslim leaders in the ANC also played a direct role in the reclamation of District Six, where more than 60% of the claimants were Muslim.

By 1994, as in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, greater Cape Town still constituted the main geographical site of Cape Muslim communities, with a constellation of Muslim religious and historically important places in and around Cape Town. The heterogeneous and contested social order of the poly-centred greater Cape Town interacted with a heterogeneous, contested, changing and often partial Islamic sacred order created by decades of boundary-making, recasting of identities, re-interpretation and transmission. Among

Coloured Muslims, this also interacted with a sense among many Coloureds that the Cape was a non-black territory to which they had a special claim. As a result, apart from racial and ethnic dimensions, socio-economic positions and gender, identifications with local spaces also helped to constitute Muslim identities. Many Muslim voices, as indicated in the name of the MJC's radio station, also constituted a "Voice of the Cape".

### **The clerics and religious and community leadership**

By 1994, Muslims in the Western Cape constituted an internally heterogeneous population in terms of socio-economic position, race, gender, culture and age. This diversity constituted a challenge to communal and religious leaders. Clerics were in numerous ways involved in creating, strengthening or recasting a sacred order that would reinforce the cohesiveness of the diverse Muslim population with its limited resources, at the same time incorporating or subjecting its diverse tendencies. In the process, they played an active role with regard to membership, integrity maintenance, symbolic territory, bonding and solidarity, tradition, respect for role-status, and hierarchy and authority.

The sacred order that emerged was internally heterogeneous and contingent, and not the dominant symbolic order of all Muslims at all times. The continued strong local authority of imams, other competing clerical bodies, the presence of rival community radio stations and organizations, and the often higher skills of Muslim professionals meant that the MJC was unable to establish complete hegemony as religious interpreters.

The MJC constructed, argued and defended its authority in new ways after 1994, due to a new political space, new means of media and the greater professionalisation among clerics. However, this development also was the result of deliberate political involvement by a new generation of leaders, partly prompted by a more prominent role by community-based challengers to its authority, especially PAGAD and the IUC's Radio 786. The greater political involvement was a new phase after the political low profile held by most clerics before the 1990s, but it showed resemblances to previous historical contingencies when the pre-MJC clerics acted as both religious and community leaders.

The increase in Muslim professionals, wider education and new access to Islamic knowledge and news from the rest of the Muslim world, dissipated the authority of the clerics as interpreters of Islam. The authority of the MJC clerics was attacked by some in PAGAD and Radio 786 on the basis that every Muslim is an imam or an interpreter of Islam. However, it was also attacked on the basis that they did not have sufficient qualifications to be clerics, an implicit acknowledgement of their different role and status.

The campaign against the clerics resulted in the MJC leadership re-emphasizing the historical contribution, authority and legitimacy of the clerics as interpreters of Islam. It tried to reform the system of selection and accountability of clerics, partly following up a longer-term process of professionalization. The MJC leadership also established the congregation as - theoretically - the key actor in the selection of clerics, which

represented a challenge to the practice of hereditary imams. However, in numerous cases imams, mosque committees and congregations continued previous practices.

Some changes may have been influenced by the campaign of delegitimization and violence. However, changes were not brought about by PAGAD replacing the existing clerics, but rather by the clerics themselves. The campaign of intimidation did successfully inhibit the freedom of action of many clerics and the MJC. However, while alternative interpreters of Islam emerged, the subsequent decline in popular support for PAGAD and state counter-measures meant that the clerics retained their role as the most important interpreters of Islam and transmitters of religious tradition.

Both the MJC and the IUC leadership were involved in religious and ideological boundary-setting. Muslim clerics in the MJC effectively recast the available Muslim identities by turning to a Muslim communal discourse that partly reflected existing identities and elements. However, the discourse also reconstructed communal identity to explicitly accommodate a reformed Sufism, marginalize Shia Muslims, favour various forms of Islamism and patriarchal family values, and include a stronger transnational dimension. This recast identity and community of members was also intended as a power base for the MJC in their newly-emphasized role as communal custodians.

However, different conceptualizations of Muslim identity and community were expressed by PAGAD and Radio 786, Muslims aligned to the ANC and progressive thinkers, Muslims aligned to the opposition parties, Muslims aligned to the Islamist parties and Muslims who did not care about political participation. Progressive thinkers, Qibla's combination of Khomeinist Islamism and a class struggle, as well as secularist, modernist and postmodernist outlooks, shaped Muslim discursive spaces and identities. The various forms of boundary-setting were not without internal contradictions or poles of possible tension. As the MJC secretary general Achmat Sedick remarked, the diversity of the Muslim population made it difficult to promote or establish a unifying group identity.

As far as a sacred order was concerned, the imams and clerics within and outside the MJC remained the primary interpreters and actors, although not the only ones. However, as far as communal leadership was concerned, the authority of the clerics in the diverse Muslim population was more partial, more open to challenge by other actors, and of uneven strength in different contexts, periods and disputes.

### **PAGAD and the challenging of codes**

PAGAD's emergence was very much linked to the local context and fluidity in the Coloured and Asian community, and between working-class and middle class Muslims in the 1990s. In some ways the motivations of younger supporters overlapped with those of many young gangsters, often gangsters from Muslim families and sometimes even from the same families as PAGAD supporters. Both PAGAD and the gangs provided for similar sociopsychological needs.

The early PAGAD campaign had a considerable performative dimension, with a new emphasis on new forms of Islamic dress or headscarves related to the Palestinian struggle and related innovations and Islamist slogans. These served to attract further attention from the mainstream and largely non-Muslim local and international media, which increased the incentive to act accordingly, but also served to clearly differentiate Muslim Coloureds and Indians from non-Muslim Coloureds and Indians.

However, it would be too reductionist to see PAGAD merely as another gang emerging from similar dynamics, or to depict PAGAD as either rooted in gang dynamics or as merely Islamist. PAGAD could be more accurately depicted as a community organization which protected Muslim families and which also created a new communal identity with a strong transnational dimension around specific interpretations of Islam. Sometimes this occurred in interaction with Muslim gang members and dynamics, but its initial popular base and its later militant membership often came from socio-economic backgrounds that differed from those of most working-class gangsters.

PAGAD succeeded in projecting a particular framework of family and community values, Islam and the fight against gangs and drugs into the centre of Muslim and regional politics, gaining an international profile in the process. However, while its politicization of the fight against criminals succeeded, its criminalization of Muslim religious and political opponents largely failed. Both its diverse popular base and the clerics, who remained the main interpreters of Islamic symbols and discourses, would largely turn away from PAGAD as its methods became ever more violent.

However, PAGAD was not only a movement that challenged the state as an alternative agency of law enforcement. It also challenged the human rights approach that dominated political and legal codes after 1994. Ironically, the state later resorted to measures against gangs that reflected PAGAD's own assessment rather than an approach emphasizing individual human rights.

In addition, PAGAD expressed significant popular support for vigilantism and provided a symbolic example that vigilantism could successfully change the power balance between gangs and the communities in which they lived. In spite of some of the excesses associated with PAGAD, by the year 2000 mainstream clerics and many Muslim media still supported such non-state community protection initiatives.

PAGAD's campaign did create a new image of Muslims in non-Muslim communities in the region and within the broader South Africa, and it broadened the symbolic repertoire of Muslims. However, as some of its supporters turned to more extremist tactics, its popularity declined and it did not achieve a shift to a new Muslim identity among most Muslims or communal leadership. After PAGAD as a vigilante group was crippled by state action, its leadership was also unable to convert its existing networks into a new broad-based Islamist community movement or an Islamist political party. Nevertheless, PAGAD could still in future serve as an historical example for similar or new forms of militant Islamism, for which the context of the Western Cape has continued to provide incentives and opportunities.

## Elections

Several individuals, groups and struggle structures from the period before 1994 would influence and partially structure Muslim politics after 1994. These included Shaykh Nazeem Mohammed of the MJC, with his close ties to Nelson Mandela, figures like imam Achmad Cassiem and his group Qibla, figures like Ebrahim Rasool and several others in the circle of progressive thinker-activists, the Boorhaanol Islam movement and Imam Abdurrahman Bassier and Achmat Davids, and former activists like Farid Sayed of *Muslim News* and Yusuf da Costa of the Naqshbandi Sufi order.

While Islamic, Islamist and Muslim communal discourses played a role, Muslims still mostly conducted politics using their networks, assets and shared identities within broader Coloured and Asian politics. The geographical concentration, social cohesion, historical networks and capital and skills base among Muslims contributed to their good representation among candidates of the ANC, NP and later the DA, as well as within the provincial ANC leadership. In local politics, Muslims were also well represented among independent candidates.

Eventually, as in the decades of history before 1994, most Coloured and Asian Muslims were divided between support for either a white-led opposition party or the black-led ANC alliance. While most supported the former, even while rejecting a return to a system of white rule, a strong minority supported the latter. A smaller but resilient minority chose a distinctive Islamist party consisting of considerable numbers who remained floating voters without strong allegiances to any party, while many others abstained in apathy, protest or alienation.

In the case of Coloureds and Indians, the lack of participation by many voters could be explained as apathy and skepticism about the new political order *ab initio*, because of their limited influence in any system where they formed a clear minority. These tendencies also fuelled support for PAGAD's vigilante activities. The AMP's growth potential was seriously constrained by the political apathy among many Coloured voters.

The reluctance of many lower income Coloureds and Indians in urban areas to vote for the ANC partly stemmed from perceptions that the post-1994 empowerment of black people would occur at their expense in the areas of employment, housing and welfare benefits. Many among the more shielded middle class did support the ANC, which could provide them with more opportunities than the predominantly white-led elites of the opposition parties.

However, a substantial minority among the Coloured and Indian middle class also did not support the ANC, while support for the ANC increased among rural working-class Coloureds facing entrenched Afrikaner and white English-speaking communities and elites in the Western Cape. Still, the largest group among both Coloured and Indian Muslims remained floating voters without a strong party allegiance. Clearly, apart from choices based on the personalities of leaders, ethnic and racial identities and perceived group-related interests also had some influence on voting patterns.

Muslim supporters of the non-Islamist opposition parties were a diverse group. However, none of the leading figures among them produced new articulations of Islam comparable to those of the progressive thinkers in the public domain in order to underscore their political position. Instead, most adhered to a similarly conservative clerical discourse such as that of the MJC leadership, for example that of Imam Moutie Saban, or to a pragmatic approach that the opposition parties were stronger or could achieve more for Muslims, like Yagyah Adams.

The praxis of the political struggle and the commitment to the UDF and ANC were the major drivers of progressive Islamic discourse, rather than the other way round. Nevertheless, the progressive discourse also included a reformist approach to Islam, including attention to gender equality and a contextual rather than an historical hermeneutics. All these thinkers and activists argued that Islam and Muslim interests could be served best by supporting the ANC, the secular dispensation with its space for Islam and an Islam-based promotion of the interests of all, Muslim and non-Muslim, alike.

However, the progressives, including Ebrahim Rasool, only constituted some of the Muslim supporters of the ANC. Muslim supporters in the ANC in the 1994 elections were a diverse group. Some of them supported a clear division between the secular state and religion, like minister Dullah Omar. However, many supported the dominant conservative clerical discourse that constituted a wing of internal criticism on issues like the death penalty, like Sh. Ebrahim Gabriels and Sh. Achmat Sedick of the MJC. Some supporters even aimed at an Islamic political order for Muslims but supported the ANC as major liberatory actor, such as Ganief Hendricks of the IUC.

There is no available evidence that indicates a significant difference between the way Coloured Muslims and other Coloureds voted. Analysts, observers and participants, including the MJC leadership, other clerics, Esack and Bangstad agree that most Muslims supported the opposition parties. These results revealed the limited influence of the Muslim clerical elite and main institutions on political choices. After all, the MJC and IUC leadership, both Muslim community radio stations and the Muslim elite, all institutions and networks that had a strong influence on the interpretation of Islam, were clearly against the secular opposition parties. However, most Muslims ignored their message on this issue.

After 1994, religious collective identification had strengthened among Coloureds and Asians. A significant minority of Muslims did support the small Islamist parties, in spite of divisions, limited campaigning, a relatively weak organization and strong competition from much bigger organizations. This presaged a core of support for such parties and perhaps some growth potential. However, many people supporting a role for Islam in the public domain did not necessarily vote for the Islamist parties.

While secular frameworks dominated in the ANC, NP, DP and DA, many candidates took care to also frame their messages in terms of Christianity or Islam or religious



values. Some religious institutions were used to mobilize people to support these parties, and voters sometimes saw the policies of the parties they opposed as a threat to their Islamic framework of interpretation, Muslim identity and Muslim interests. Thus, mainstream politics, predominantly secular, also periodically contained a dimension of religious identity politics. In addition, the support for Islamism, as reflected in the discourses of the MJC, the IUC, Boorhaanol Islam and other groups, was far more widespread than indicated by the votes for the AMP, and could in future emerge in different forms in new political contexts.

Religious identities and communal mobilization thus had a significant impact on politics among Muslims in the Western Cape during the period 1994-2000. However, in combination, demographics and racial identities, the existing power constellation between various parties, regional and territorial dynamics, socio-economic factors and party leadership had a greater influence on electoral politics in the Western Cape.

### **An increased transnational focus**

Muslims in SA constituted a minority community in a far corner of a continent relatively far from the center of the Islamic world. For them, identification with and participation in Muslim struggles elsewhere served as a particular bridge to the rest of the world. In addition, in the post-1994 environment, many Muslims felt more exposed to the different forces of economic and cultural globalisation and US hegemony in a unipolar world. They could easily associate their own concerns about cultural and political vulnerability as a minority with the perceived position of Muslims being under siege worldwide.

When the issue of participation in the 1994 elections emerged, the MJC approached the ambassadors of Muslim states to obtain their views on whether, in terms of Islam, Muslims were allowed to vote. This was a remarkable granting of interpretative and advisory power by an organization of clerics to foreign Muslim governments. Foreign Muslim governments also used local structures as proxies, for example in the case of the more Saudi Arabia-aligned MJC and the more Iran-aligned IUC.

In addition, foreign Muslim governments used these opportunities to emphasize their protection of the Muslim minority. Such gestures were meaningful, given the historical anxieties among some Muslims about becoming a persecuted minority – an example had been the very recent killings of Bosnian Muslims. In addition, Muslims sometimes felt uneasy within the symbolic context of the post-1994 dispensation. The foreign Muslim governments also reflected an assumption of some symbolic authority over Muslims in SA.

However, the political interaction by local Muslims with the rest of the Muslim world was also differentiated. Muslim politics in sub-Saharan Africa received very limited attention, while the Middle East and other regions received much attention. Most major groups and institutions differentiated between the mostly pro-US governments of the Middle East and the Islamist movements, many supporting the latter. However, while groups with a Salafi background, like that of Osama bin Laden, received some support

among local militants as examples of defiance to US hegemony, radical Salafi discourses had very limited if any influence on local activists. In addition, the competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran in Gulf geopolitics would also constitute an arena for MJC-IUC rivalry.

The focus on Muslims being under siege globally received much more emphasis within the Qibla-IUC networks, to the extent that it often mystified local political struggle groups and dynamics, while focusing on a clash between a reified Islamic and reified Western world. The Islamist parties, *Muslim Views* and the MJC, while sharing much of this outlook on the global position of Muslims, did not in a comparable way convert this into a central theme.

Local power bases were used to try and influence the flow of events in Bosnia, Kosovo and especially Palestine, but the transnational impact of local efforts was negligible. In contrast, as indicated, the impact of the transnational dimensions and struggles was significant in many ways as far as local dimensions and intra-Muslim contests were concerned. However, especially in the local elections of 2000, it became clear that in certain circumstances local interests, concerns, identities and objectives were rated more important than the symbolically and emotionally significant Palestinian struggle.

### **Symbolic order**

Virtually all major Muslim actors agreed that Islam and politics could not be separated. These actors included the MJC, Boorhaanol Islam, the progressive thinkers, Qibla, the IUC, PAGAD, the Muslim parties, and some Muslim leaders in the ANC and secular opposition parties. Some Muslim leaders and thinkers and Muslim supporters of the ANC and non-Islamist parties supported a separation between politics and religion. The MJC, Boorhaanol Islam and the Muslim parties all promoted participation in the political system, while Qibla and the IUC had a more sceptical and mostly rejectionist approach to participation. Both participation and rejectionism aimed at reconstituting and asserting the divided Muslim community and its structures in relation to the formations of the new state.

For Muslims in SA, according to the MJC and IUC, the Quran was still the real constitution and *Shariah* the law. The MJC also agreed that the establishment of an Islamic government was the short-term or long-term goal of every Islamic group in order to implement Allah's commandments. However, both the MJC and IUC did not directly pursue Muslim supremacy in SA.

The links of MJC leaders to the ANC, considerations of status and patronage, and the opportunity to ensure the clerics' hegemony by staying close to the government possibly played a role in the MJC's decision to support participation. According to the MJC, even though the government was secular, Muslims had to take advantage of the religious freedom enshrined in the Constitution. However, the MJC did formulate limits to cooperation and participation. If the government would promulgate anything that was against Islamic law, Muslims had a right to oppose and ignore it. The latter statement

allowed the option of collective passive resistance, but this option was never formally considered or pursued by the MJC during the period 1994-2000.

The IUC had the most comprehensively formulated approach to combining Islamism and the constitutional order. However, in spite of their deep rivalries, the views of the MJC and the IUC on a Muslim leadership council and authoritative Islamic courts were very similar. Prominent MJC clerics also shared the IUC's views on a Muslim tax basis and economic consolidation of the community. The possible differences in emphasis on workers rights and redistribution of wealth within the diverse Muslim community never became important themes in the public debate.

In addition to providing an Islamic discourse suited to the ANC's political struggle, the progressives tried to change the dominance of traditionalist discourses and clerics among Muslims. In this regard, it shared many themes with Qibla and leaders in PAGAD and the IUC, but their links and loyalties to the ANC government and the radical vigilantism supported by Qibla and leaders in PAGAD and the IUC prevented the emergence of an informal or formal alliance between them in Muslim politics. While the Islamist parties mostly reproduced traditionalist values, the MJC clerics remained the dominant interpreters of Islamic religious frameworks in the period 1994-2000.

In the arena of symbolic structures, the relations between clerics and the ANC government were diverse and spanned the entire spectrum. On some issues the MJC leadership was willing to actively support the government, and on others it strongly opposed the government, but its major approach was that of creating a critical, alternative discourse within the ANC government's broad alliance. However, the MJC were unable to usurp the authority of individual local imams and clerics, whose political views and choices were as diverse as those of their congregations.

The MJC, as well as the IUC, denied the South African state authority over MPL. Based on their interpretation of divine law, and in the case of some perhaps buttressed by a sense of religious and cultural superiority, this attitude constituted a basis for legitimacy in the symbolic sphere to that of a majoritarian democracy. In addition, both of them were unwilling to be constrained by MPL only. The MJC leadership and the AMP considered an Islamic political order a long-term objective, while the IUC started to promote a political order infused with Islamic values and an Islamic law system outside the cultural confines of a Western system.

In this regard, a two-pronged and sometimes contradictory approach was evident. According to the MJC and the IUC, the state should be a dispenser of morality, and often Islamic morality at that. At the same time, greater recognition of Muslim authority over Muslim affairs and Islamic law was also emphasized. However, neither of these discourses had a significant influence on the state and government.

## **Political strategies**

In the executive-dominated political order, electoral politics had a limited value to the relatively small number of Muslims. Several approaches with a broad political effect would be followed by Muslims after 1994, sometimes in combination or in succession.

First, some Muslims focused on building Muslim community institutions and self-sufficiency while leaving national politics aside. Others simply abstained from politics, but focused on increasing their economic, professional and local power base, with a secondary perhaps indirect political approach. Thirdly, some Muslims tried to influence outside powers, including Iran and Saudi Arabia, to gain resources, advice and symbolic protection in their local struggles. Although this sometimes resulted in local Muslim groups participating in a proxy competition between geopolitical rivals in the Muslim world, this approach did achieve several successes.

A fourth element with many historical precedents was that some Muslims lobbied government authorities and businesses and gained political or economic concessions and advantages. However, due to internal divisions, no representative or strong lobby emerged during the period 1994-2000. This deficient mobilization and organisation, combined with few bargaining chips, meant that the ANC national government or the NP or DA provincial governments were seldom effectively pressured or forced to prioritize Muslim communal concerns.

Fifth, some Muslims cooperated closely with the government of the day. Their reasons varied: patronage, expedience and pragmatism, or a belief in the sincerity of the ANC program of political transformation. However, as a sixth approach, most Muslims voted for the NNP, DP or later DA opposition parties during the period 1994-2000, in contrast to the generally pro-ANC or pro-PAC message of their main organizations and media.

A seventh approach was to use the system to project an Islamic message, for example on the death penalty, and to conduct protests and exert pressure within the parameters of the political system. This approach was widely used by Muslims, mostly with a limited impact on the policy-makers but effectively expressing and constituting Muslim discourses and solidarities.

An eighth group among Muslims was apathetic, perhaps because they saw themselves as powerless. A ninth group advocated a boycott of the existing system while mobilizing and educating Muslims. Among Muslims, a questioning of the system's legitimacy and a debate about whether to participate in elections would emerge in the run-up to the 1994 and 1999 national and the 1996 and 2000 local elections.

These approaches in many cases resembled those followed during the periods of Dutch colonial, English colonial or Afrikaner nationalist rule. In contrast to some historical periods before 1994, there were no prominent cases of passive resistance. However, several new approaches were also possible and pursued.

For the first time, for example, Muslim politicians and senior bureaucrats played a prominent role in the executive and helped to create the nexus of formations within the new political system. Both the MJC and the IUC favoured one political platform for all Muslims, but this did not materialize. However, the new Islamist parties that emerged, although seriously deficient in terms of organization, provided a different and sustained basis for mobilization.

One means to influence politics by Muslims was extra-parliamentary community mobilization in the form of PAGAD. Urban terrorism by a small group of Muslims was another means to pursue political goals. The constitution of Muslim discursive and symbolic public places by Muslim media in a more open media sphere after 1994 was another means. This occurred with small beginnings on the Internet, in print media, notably by the new-look *Muslim Views* after 1998, but most successfully by the radio stations Radio 786 and Voice of the Cape.

### **Assessment**

Irony and paradox would mark Muslim politics in the Cape during the period 1994-2000. A universal religion would be mediated and enabled by very local histories, discourses and political struggles. The clerics would remain the main interpreters of Islam among Muslims, but the most creative thinking on Islam in a changing world would come from a few progressive Muslim activists and Muslim academics. These thinkers would dominate interreligious dialogue and academic interaction with scholars of Islam in Europe and the USA, although they had limited popular support among most Muslims for their interpretations of Islam. They would also serve as the main interpreters of Muslim politics in non-Muslim circles in the EU and USA, even though they were pro-ANC and most Muslims were opposed to the ANC. Although these thinkers were pro-ANC, with some of them very active in the struggle before 1994, the ANC would prefer the previously far less active and more traditional MJC leadership as its interlocutor with Muslims.

While the government preferred the MJC as an interlocutor, the MJC leadership did not recognize the authority of the government over Muslim Personal Law and largely constituted a conservative internal critic on human rights policy within the ANC alliance. After 1994, individual Muslims played a more important role in the executive and bureaucracy than ever before in South Africa, and Islam was even consciously recognized by the government in the public domain. However, in a supreme irony, the constitutional order after 1994 was less cognizant of the dominant Islamic moral and family discourses than under colonial and Afrikaner rule.

The greater freedom of the democratic constitutional order, and its various effects, played a major role in enabling the emergence of the PAGAD vigilante movement. PAGAD successfully challenged the government's human rights-focused approach to fighting crime and would influence law enforcement against gangs. However, while PAGAD effectively eliminated the top layer of leaders in many gangs to stop the threat to Muslims, in the process it unleashed more instability as others fought anew to establish

their dominance in the criminal world. Aspiring to promote Muslim interests, its activities were used to reinforce the distorted image of Muslims being violent radicals, used by various anti-Muslim forces globally. While the MJC was criticized by the IUC and PAGAD on the grounds of being unrepresentative, due to PAGAD-linked violence, the community support of both the latter organizations would be limited by 2000 and of the three, the MJC won the battle for potential community leadership.

However, while the MJC had the government's support, it was not able to constitute a hegemonic authority over clerics, who remained the most important local interpreters of Islam. Most Muslims also disregarded the MJC's political position and voted for white-led, non-Islamist opposition parties. Likewise, the major Muslim media, which played an important role in the formation of Muslim public spaces, was avidly followed by thousands of Muslims. However, their general criticism of the opposition parties did not prevent most Muslims from voting for those parties, even as they rejected the previous history of white rule. Nevertheless, even though most Muslims were Afrikaans-speaking, and voted for parties supported by most Afrikaners, they did not form a counter-movement to their generally English-speaking elite. Most Muslims also did not actively support the effort of some Afrikaners to foster a new non-racial political identity for Afrikaans speakers.

Even though most major Muslim organizations and media shared a desire to project Islam in the public sphere, the moderate Islamist parties only acquired a limited number of votes in elections and most Muslims supported non-Islamist parties. While Muslims formed a small population and the value of unity was proclaimed by all major actors, they remained among the politically most divided groups.

Thus, the effect of Islamic frameworks and Muslim identities on politics during 1994-2000 was not always linear, uniform, central or constant. Various contesting Muslim social identity frameworks were available, but none of these became completely hegemonic and Muslims remained a politically divided population. Nevertheless, even their contestation linked up sufficiently with previous histories and the everyday experiences of Muslims to result in a broad and heterogeneous communal consciousness and identity, and a recurring sense of common destiny.

At times, the identities were dormant or less central. However, they coalesced in several events and responses that brought together considerable numbers of Muslims around similar frameworks and projects, even if for a limited period and with some dissenters. These events and responses included the Tri-Centenary in 1994, protests over Bosnia in 1995, PAGAD and the fight against drugs and gangsterism in 1996 in general, including the Vygieskraal meeting in 1996, the Oudekraal campaign in 1997 linking environmental concerns and Muslim symbolic spaces, the rejection of the constitution's legal space for abortion, gay rights, prostitution, gambling and pornography, and the protest campaign over Palestine in 2000.

Some of the discourses of Muslim figures in the ANC and non-Islamist opposition parties, and of Muslim academics, allowed room for secularism. However, in most cases,

the various discourses of Muslim groups created symbolic bases for community and religious leaders and structures within the new political system. In addition, individual Muslims were provided with broader choices in terms of political participation in the system. The MJC and the Islamist parties, for example, agreed that the establishment of an Islamic government was the short-term or long-term goal of every Islamic group in order to implement Allah's commandments. However, their discourses also served to re-connect Muslims to the new political system, but on a particular basis and in distinctive relationships.

In the case of the IUC and, to some extent, Boorhaanol Islam, their discourses went further. They used the existing system to build the foundations for their own Muslim symbolic sphere or new authorities, effectively rejecting the conditions of their own representation in the new democracy. Such structures could, in some contingencies, be separate from the existing unitary political system or, more likely, develop into distinctive parts of a more federal or confederal political system in SA. Discourses could also conceivably develop that gave recognition to the local Cape-related ethnic, socio-economic and spatial dimensions of Muslim identities. At present, however, the chances of this happening are limited.

In the various political orders in South Africa since 1652, Islam was initially excluded from the official public domain, although the application of this approach was uneven. Muslim identities regularly included a dimension of cultural or political resistance to the existing order that they did not control. In contrast, individual Muslims played an important part in the construction of the political order after 1994, which also explicitly allowed public recognition of Islam on an equal basis with other religions. Some Muslim thinkers also elaborated on new understandings of Islam that reinforced the new order, and the major Muslim media would emphasize the role of Muslims in the struggle against colonial and Afrikaner rule. Nevertheless, most Muslims would not vote for the ANC alliance or PAC, and some articulations of Islam and Muslim identity would also challenge the new dominant cultural and political codes and incorporate new dimensions of resistance.

Transnational dimensions, infused with local meanings in the context of local struggles, became more important after 1994. This resulted in a reconstitution of Muslim concerns, and the reconstituted concerns precipitated new forms of Muslim politics in the Western Cape. This meant that the authority of the government of South Africa over Muslims on some issues was potentially limited. In some future contingencies, allegiance to the government or state could be trumped by considerations of loyalty to Islam or other Muslims under siege. Thus, transnational dimensions, in interaction with local dynamics, allowed for differing potential models of citizenship and authority among many Muslims.

Interpretations of Islam, but also Muslim identities and communal politics, were contingent and diverse, with changes and continuities, new phenomena and iteration. These did not always determine the political choices and conduct of most Muslims in the greater Cape Town area during the formation of the new political order in the period 1994-2000. In addition, the processes of secularization effected by some Muslims and

encountered by others became stronger. However, compared to the decade before 1994, being Muslim achieved new significance amid the ebb and flow of the political lives of individuals and communities.

This resulted in new articulations and forms of mobilization, in planned shifts in the constellation of power, but also in unintended consequences. Sometimes the political reach of Muslims exceeded their grasp. Sometimes political projects by Muslims resulted in a transmission of Islamic frameworks and Muslim identities to new generations. The most important effect, however, was to reassert Muslim identities and to recast the symbolic sphere of a new political order.

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## GLOSSARY

- al-khulafa ar-rashidun*: the first four so-called rightly guided caliphs, namely Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali
- amir*: chief of a political or armed group
- asabiyya*: group consciousness and solidarity
- atha'an*: call to prayer
- bayah*: oath of allegiance
- dar al-'ahd*: realm of contractual peace in Islamic doctrine
- dar al-harb*: realm of war in Islamic doctrine
- dar al-Islam*: realm in which Islam and Islamic law prevail
- darura*: necessity
- dawa*: call to Islam; propagation of the faith
- dhikr*: remembrance of Allah
- dhimmi*: a person belonging to the category of protected people (*ahl ad-dhimma*) in the Islamic state
- din*: a religion together with its practices in general
- eid*: celebration
- fatwa*: legal opinion based on the holy texts of Islam, in answer to a question about a specific case
- hadith*: traditions relating to the statements and deeds of the prophet Muhammad as recounted by his companions
- hajj*: the canonical pilgrimage
- halal*: authorized by Islamic law
- haram*: unauthorized by Islamic law
- ijma*: the consensus of a majority on a question of law
- imam*: prayer leader; title of religious, communal or political leader
- iman*: faith
- ijtihad*: interpretation by personal effort of questions not covered by the Quran or Sunnah
- jihad*: a divine institution of struggle to extend or defend Islam
- kufr*: unbelief in God; an active striving to deny God
- madrasah*: (plural *madaris*) school of higher study
- maslaha*: interest of the *ummah*
- maulana*: religious scholar
- mujahideen*: (plural of *mujahed*) combatants in a jihad
- qari*: (plural *quarra*) a reciter of the Quran in public
- shahada*: profession of faith that there is no God but God/Allah, and that Muhammad is the messenger of God
- shahid*: (plural *shuhada*) believers who die for the faith, in defense of it, or persecuted for it
- shariah*: the canonical law of Islam in the Quran and Sunnah, elaborated in terms of four Sunni law schools and several Shia law schools
- shaykh*: title of one who has spiritual or political authority; a religious scholar or dignitary
- Shi'ism*: a branch of Islam with doctrines different from those of Sunni Muslims

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*Shura*: consultation; the term now often refers to representative institutions rooted in Islamic tradition

*Sunnah*: the Prophet Muhammad's spoken and acted example

*Sunni*: the largest groups of Muslims, who recognize the first four caliphs, attribute no special religious function to the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad's son-in-law Ali, and adhere to one of the four Sunni schools of law

*Tawhid*: acknowledging the unity of God

*Ulama*: (plural of *alim*) those who are recognized as scholars or authorities of religious matters

*Ummah*: a people, community or nation; used here as the community of believers in Islam

*velayat-i-faqih*: Shia doctrine of political guardianship of the jurisprudent

*zakah*: giving up of a portion of wealth one may possess to purify or legitimize what one retains

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
AMP	Africa Muslim Party
ANC	African National Congress
APO	African Political Organization
CMA	Cape Malay Association
COI	Call of Islam
CORE	Community Outreach Program
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
CPA	Coloured People's Association
CPC	Cape People's Congress
DA	Democratic Alliance
DEIC	Dutch East Indian Company
DP	Democratic Party
FF	Freedom Front
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution
HWMEM	Hospital Welfare and Muslim Educational Movement
ICSA	Islamic Council of South Africa
IFP	Inkatha Federal Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IP	Islamic Party
IUC	Islamic Unity Convention
MA	Muslim Assembly
MAGO	Muslims Against Global Oppression
MAIL	Muslims Against Illegitimate Leaders
MJC	Muslim Judicial Council
MPL	Muslim Personal Law
MYM	Muslim Youth Movement
NEUM	Non-European Unity Movement
NP	National Party
NNP	New National Party
OIC	Organization of the Islamic Conference
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PAGAD	People Against Gangsterism And Drugs
PLP	People's Liberation Party
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Program
RSA	Republic of South Africa, established in 1961
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACP	South African Communist Party
SALC	South African Law Commission
SANZAF	South African National Zakah Fund
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCDP	United Christian Democratic Party
UDA	United Democratic Alliance
UDM	United Democratic Movement

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UDF	United Democratic Movement
UUCSA	United Ulama Council of South Africa
WIVL	Workers International Vanguard League
WTO	World Trade Organizations

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